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EXCURSIONS IN NORMANDY,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE

CHARACTER, MANNERS, CUSTOMS,

AND TRADITIONS OF THE PEOPLE;

OF THE

STATE OF SOCIETY IN GENERAL;

AND OF THE

HISTORY, ARTS, SCIENCES, COMMERCE, MANUFACTURES,

ANTIQUITIES, SCENERY, &c.

OF

THAT INTERESTING PROVINCE OF FRANCE.

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EDITED FROM THE

JOURNAL OF A RECENT TRAVELLER

BY

FREDERIC SHOBERL, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

THERE is scarcely a province of continental Europe which possesses a stronger and more varied interest for the English reader than Normandy. The invasion and conquest of England by Duke William; the important influence exercised by that event on the institutions and manners of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers; the union of the countries under the sway of one sovereign for upwards of two centuries; the subsequent reduction and occupation of Normandy by our fifth and sixth Henry; lastly, the traits of resemblance in the character of the Normans and the English, and in the very aspect of the two countries—these are certainly points which ought to awaken the attention, the curiosity, and the

sympathies of the English in behalf of Normandy and the Normans, even were the province not, as it actually is, the richest and the most flourishing in France, by its agriculture, commerce, and manufactures.

These Excursions afford abundant intrinsic evidence that the Author is a man whose testimony is not liable to the suspicion of national partialities or prejudices, and whose observations are not the result of a rapid flight, like that of most of those birds of passage—modern travellers—over the country visited, but of a stay of some duration at the most important places in the province. They prove him to be a man of deep reflection, of a sound heart as well as of an enlarged and enlightened mind; a man not disposed to square his notions on politics, religion, morals, commerce, and the present not wholly unalarming state of society, according to any fashionable system or received theory, but boldly forming his judgment on all subjects under the guidance of Reason alone.

Besides those attractions which the general reader expects to find in a book of Travels,

these volumes possess a higher, a more solid, and a more permanent interest. Treating, as they do, many questions of general policy; discussing the state and spirit of trade in a most (perhaps *the* most) important commercial town in France; describing the wretched condition of the work-people, men, women, and children, in the principal manufacturing district of that kingdom; exposing the inhuman system of plunder, practised upon the wretched German emigrants enticed to Havre for the purpose of embarking there for America; and denouncing with honest indignation the profound immorality with which the superior classes of the French nation are universally infected—this work recommends itself to the serious attention of the statesman, the legislator, the merchant, and the philanthropist, of our own country. For the historical and statistical inquirer also it is fraught with information; though the Editor has been compelled, by the limits to which he was restricted, to omit with reluctance a chapter of considerable length, and peculiarly

valuable to the professor of the law, on the judicial institutions of the ancient Normans, in which some of our own seem to have originated—if, however, they were not both derived from the same German source and existing contemporaneously in Normandy and in England, anterior to the Conquest.

FREDERIC SHOBERL.

London, Aug. 20, 1841.

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EXCURSIONS

IN

NORMANDY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

Normandy in general—The ancient Normans of German extraction—Affinity of the Character of the modern Normans to that of the Germans—Normandy the richest Province of France in Natural Productions—Sketch of the History of the Normans and of Normandy—Influence of the Germanic principle.

For four years—I have often been obliged to calculate, in order to convince myself that it was only four years, and not thrice as many—I had not seen my native country: fate, chance, my good or my ill luck, had confined me in the capital of France. How different did every thing there appear to me! Both Nature and people continued to be strange, strongly as they interested me, and desirous as I was to familiarize myself with them. I heard what they said, I understood the words, but their essence was foreign

to me. When I found myself too uncomfortable in the great city, I fled from it, to ease my heart amidst the scenery of free Nature. But Nature always seemed as cold and as calculating as the people, and I suspected a reaction between them, which at once shocked and cheered me.

The idea of a reaction between men and Nature, which had often occurred to me in the environs of Paris, was far more strongly impressed upon me here in Normandy. The ancient Normans were of German extraction, and much German blood still flows in the veins of the Normans of the present day. But the land is pure German. In the towns every step reminds you of Germany; while, in the country, every tree and every hedge smile on the native of Germany as old acquaintances, and greet him with welcome in his mother-tongue. You might place Nürnberg or Cologne on the spot where Rouen stands, or Nürnberg close to Rouen, and turn out of the last street of Nürnberg into the first of Rouen without observing that you had just quitted a German and entered a French city.

The Norman retains to this day the principal features of the German character. He is kind-hearted, energetic, industrious, and brave; and, in addition to these qualities, which are met with often enough among other Frenchmen, he is distinguished from them by his perseverance. The Frenchman is easily excited either to good or to evil, and, owing precisely to this susceptibility, he is fickle. The Norman adheres stedfastly to the resolution he has once formed,

and labours quietly on till he has accomplished his object. No inhabitant of a French province, excepting, perhaps, the Alsatian, is so attached to his native country as the Norman. He is liable to home-sickness, not in the same degree indeed as the Swiss or the South German, but much like the North German; and his heart throbs violently whenever he hears the well-known air, *La Normandie.* He adheres more tenaciously than almost any other Frenchman to subsisting institutions and to ancient customs. Like the Swabian, he talked for centuries about the good old right; and most of the governments of France, how absolute soever they might be, found themselves obliged to recognize this good old right, at least in appearance; and, with this appearance, the Norman was in general satisfied, herein exhibiting another proof of his origin.

The same contrast between love of home and fondness for travel which appears in the German character is found also in the Norman, and, like the German of whatever tribe, he too is an adventurer. For almost all the discoveries which the French have made in foreign parts, they are indebted to this quality of the Normans, whose *sea-wolves* of old, the terror of all merchant-men and even of ships of war, ploughed every sea, as the vessels of their descendants still do at the present day. Lastly, one might say quite as justly, *querelle normande*, as *querelle allemande*, for the Norman has the character of taking a real delight in lawsuits. I know a man at Rouen who commenced a lawsuit with his nephew, his only

heir, on account of some informality in a contract, which the nephew offered to cancel and to replace with another, a proposal to which the uncle, however, refused to assent, that he might not let slip the fair opportunity of at last gaining one lawsuit after losing a great many. Instances of this kind are frequently occurring; hence the lawyers in Normandy are a very thriving class, and, in spite of the revolution and its innovations, they always find their kitchen, cellar, pig-sty, and poultry-yard abundantly supplied at the expence of their clients.

As the Norman is nearly related to the German, so is Normandy to Germany. The towns are distinguished, like most of the old German, by their gothic churches and town-halls, narrow streets, and large, lofty, dark houses, with small, narrow, windows. In their dwellings, the outside was to them, as to the ancient Germans, a secondary consideration, and the interior the main point: so the windows were but large enough to admit sufficient light for the inmates to see what they were about, they were quite satisfied. In the country you see, as in Germany and England, a great number of detached farm-houses, with a wall or fence surrounding the yard and garden, and many of these and their outbuildings are thatched with straw. Around them lie the most thriving fields in all France; and Norman industry and perseverance, with the aid of laws, in the spirit of ancient Germany, protecting liberty and independence, have created here in France an oasis that is a paradise of fertility and plenty.

Normandy is the richest province in France. Agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, stand on a higher step than in almost any other country in Europe, at least of the like extent. The superficies of the province amounts to about one seventeenth of all France, and the territorial revenues amounted in 1833 to 176,200,000 francs, about one ninth of all the territorial revenues of France, so that the soil here produces nearly twice as much as in the other parts of the kingdom. The produce of a hectare is, upon the average of all France, 28 fr. 55 cent.; of Normandy, 53 fr. 69 cent. In the department of Lower Seine this produce is, for arable land, 100 fr., for vineyards, 112 fr., for meadows, 84 fr., for woods, 108 fr. Normandy grows annually about 5,600,000 hectolitres of wheat, 1,316,000 hect. of rye and mangcorn, 1,731,000 hect. of buckwheat, 1,475,000 hect. of barley, 2,668,000 hect. of oats, 414,700 hect. of potatoes. In regard to cattle, it is equally flourishing: 89,340 bullocks, 9,144 draught oxen, 302,797 cows, 54,673 heifers, and 311,041 horses (in 1816), afford proof of this. Normandy produces annually 2,300,000 kilogrammes of wool, of which about 60,000 kil. are merino wool, and 540,000 kil. from a cross of the merino. A single arrondissement in the department of Lower Seine, that of Neuchatel, makes 1,621,921 hect. of cider and perry. In regard to trade and industry, Normandy is, in like manner, the most flourishing portion of France. Havre is its first commercial town; Rouen, Elbeuf, Bolbec, are celebrated for their manufactures.

The industry and the perseverance of the inhabitants of Normandy are indisputably in a great measure the source of this flourishing state of the province; but it is not to be denied that the institutions which the Normans transplanted hither have contributed largely to this state of things, and that in reality they are the main cause of it.

For some centuries the Normans were the terror of all Europe, and, a thousand years ago, their name, wherever they passed, was not uttered without a shudder, for they were terrible in war, and as conquerors their treatment of the vanquished was frequently most cruel. But wherever they came and remained long enough to be able to sow, there they deposited in the ground a seed which produced golden fruit, and the name of this seed was—liberty. Victors and vanquished reaped the fair fruit which it yielded. Charlemagne, in his time, saw in spirit that these bold sons of the North were too impetuous, too free, too strong, for his degenerate Franks; and when he beheld their sails in the harbour of Maguelone, the obdurate conqueror of the Moors and the Saxons shed tears which became a bloody prophecy for his subjects. But these tears involved the severest condemnation of himself; and who knows whether he might not have wept rather for his own sake than over the future calamities of his people! Indeed but for the endless wars of Charlemagne, but for his ambition, which consumed the energies of his subjects as rust consumes steel, which compelled them to purchase their liberty in order to support life, and

which uselessly sacrificed the rest of the free men on the field of battle, the Normans never would have been able so to overpower the Franks as they did after Charles's death. There is something singular about great men in history: most of them are rather the spoiled children of the past, which has prepared every thing for them, than the strong fathers of a futurity created by themselves. If the efforts of Charlemagne had any definite purpose, we must assume the intention to force the German tribes to a unity, to found an undivided Germany, as the legatee of Rome. But those who cheaply attribute to him this object little heed that Charles himself contradicts them, inasmuch as he divided this united Germany among his sons. But, if this were not his design, what could it be? History has been asked this question for a thousand years past, without giving any answer; for she merely tells us that he annihilated the institutions of Germany, since he superseded the people in the courts of justice by appointed judges, since he broke their strength, and forced them to buy themselves and their freedom; that, finally, he fought many battles, subdued many nations, and was a great commander and sovereign.

His successors were not in a condition to oppose the incursions of the Normans, for they were quarrelling among themselves about the *one* vast empire which he had left, and found a people whose last energies the great emperor had wasted. A few thousand Normans were now sufficient to penetrate into the heart of the empire of the Franks, and to

overthrow all that opposed them; for they were brave, as were the Franks before Charles's time, and they were free, which the latter no longer were, and, in the feeling of their freedom, they were proud, bold, mighty, invincible. In the year 876, Rollo reduced Rouen; hence he made incursions into France with his victorious followers; and Rollo, the bold, savage Norman, the leader of those ruthless bands, of which all contemporary chroniclers speak almost as of wild beasts, pestilence, and famine, became the legislator of his people; and these laws of a barbarian were the cause of the rapid improvement of the country, and the germ of its subsequent prosperity. His laws attest that he valued his Normans, their freedom, and their independence, as highly as they did themselves. According to them, every disturber of the public peace was to be banished, and the severest punishment was awarded to theft. The efficacy of this rigour, or rather the honest disposition of the people, is attested by an anecdote which history has preserved. Fatigued by the chace, Rollo lay down in the wood of Roumare to rest himself. He hung his valuable bracelet upon a tree, and, when he went away, forgot to take it with him; so there it hung, untouched, for three years, not a creature who passed that way venturing to appropriate it to himself.

After Rollo had made peace with the king of the Franks, he convoked his states to consult with them about the welfare of the country. The assembly consisted of the bishops and barons, the mayors

and sheriffs of the towns, the chiefs of the hundreds and tithings, and of many other discreet men (*saiges hommes*). These were the representatives of the clergy, the nobility, the townsmen, and the country people, consequently of the whole population. In France at that time there was no longer a people, for Charlemagne, and still more the kings, his successors, had totally excluded it from public life; and it was not till four hundred years afterwards, in the fourteenth century, that Philip the Fair summoned for the first time the *tiers-état* to the assemblies of the states-general. As Rollo provided for a due representation of the people, or rather, as the Germanic principle, the usage and custom of the Normans, obliged him to do this, so they likewise obliged him to provide for the due administration of justice. The *Echiquier* of Normandy, a sort of jury court, was the supreme court of justice, which sat sometimes at Rouen, at others at Caen, Bayeux, or Falaise, and protected the people from injustice.

The consequences of these institutions very soon manifested themselves; and, while the most dreadful famine frequently prevailed in the rest of France, while the people there were as wretched as possible, Normandy, already under the second duke, William Longsword, attained a prosperity which even the everlasting wars with the French were not capable of annihilating.

All the dukes upon the whole respected the original institutions which they brought with them

from their mother country, though there may be instances enough in which they contrived to evade them in particulars. Even the bold Robert, for whom the terror diffused by his sword, perhaps a joke made by himself on his death-bed,* acquired the surname of the Devil, who, in scorn of the nobility, made Harlotte, the daughter of a tanner of Falaise, his wife, and mother of William the Conqueror, bowed to the laws of his ancestors. And the same William the Conqueror, in whose veins were mingled princely and plebeian blood, as were pride and energy in his heart; who defied fate and its hints, when it detained him by storms in Fecamp, and when, on landing from his ship, he chanced to fall on the shore of England; who kept the abbots and prelates within their proper bounds, curbed the nobility by a God's peace, and the people by fixing an hour at which every one should return to his home —even William respected those laws, and did not venture upon his expedition to England, till he had consulted the nobility, the clergy, and the third estate.

An anecdote, which history has transmitted to us, shows that the people themselves had not lost the remembrance of their rights, and that they had the spirit to assert them, even in opposition to the sovereign. William, the conqueror of England, was

* Returning from Palestine, he fell ill by the way, and by his command was carried on a bier by four blacks. A Norman, who fell in with him thus attended, asked if he had any message to send to his dominions. "Say," replied Robert, "that thou hast seen me carried to Paradise by four devils."

dead, and was to be buried in Caen. But when his body was set down beside the grave prepared for it, the *Horro*, the ancient cry of the Normans, was heard to proceed from amidst the crowd assembled on the occasion. A plain citizen of Caen, named Asselin, stepped forth and said that the ground in which the king was about to be buried was his property, which the king had unlawfully taken from him. He therefore opposed the burial of the body on that spot, unless justice were first done him, and compensation made for the property of which he had been wrongfully deprived; and on this point he referred to Rollo, who had once said: "The mightier a man is, the more submission he owes to the laws." Such was the conduct of a plain citizen towards the heir to the power and the influence of William the Conqueror. And the latter respected the right of the citizen, and paid him the price which he demanded for the grave of a king, his enemy. In this single anecdote there is more matter for a due appreciation of the state of the people of Normandy at that time, than in all the laws put together.

From the moment that Normandy was erected by the Germans into an independent duchy, it exercised the most decided influence on the fortunes of France. The third duke of Normandy gave to France a new royal dynasty, that of the Capets. Richard I., duke of Normandy, was Hugh Capet's guardian, and the soul of the states-general of Nayon (987), in which Lothair was deposed and the count

of Paris proclaimed king. It was then that Paris first became the capital of France; and in this circumstance alone lies a weight which has since never ceased to manifest itself in the scales of history. Robert the Devil, or rather *le magnifique*, secured the crown to Henry I. against his own mother, Constance, and his brother; and, for above a century and a half after William the Conqueror, the history of France revolved about Normandy, as the wheel about its axis.

The influence of Normandy on all Europe was not less important, when we consider that it was Normans who protected and at the same time prescribed laws to the pope in Italy, and that it was a Norman who, by the conquest of England, changed the institutions of that country, and established its influence upon the affairs of the continent.

Under John Lackland, the brother and successor of Richard Cœur de Lion, Normandy again became a part of France (in 1204, 292 years after Rollo). But this reunion changed neither the character of the people nor the importance of the province in the history of the mother country. The spirit of independence transfused into the people by the Germanic institutions, compelled Louis X. (1315) to give a new *Charte normande*, which was frequently confirmed, mentioned in almost all the royal ordinances, but, it is true, more frequently evaded; for, like the Germans of more recent times in general, the Normans were content if their right were recognized at least in the form. At length, the sixteenth

century witnessed the formation of another Norman code, the *Coutume de Normandie*, compiled by the noble chancellor L'Hopital; and thus it was found necessary in that age of lawlessness to do justice to the institutions of the ancient Normans.

The influence of Normandy on the fate of France has since been several times clearly demonstrated in history; first in the wars between England and France, which lasted from 1339 upwards of one hundred and twenty years; and afterwards more particularly at the time of the Reformation. In no part of France did the Reformation find so many and so strenuous adherents as in Normandy; the independent spirit of the people, which had maintained itself for ages; the flourishing state of the province, which allowed the people time to meditate upon themselves and their faith; the comparatively high intellectual cultivation of the whole country; lastly, the spiritual affinity with the inhabitants of those states which had first declared in favour of church reform, could not fail to procure for the Reformation disciples in this part of France, and it was not long before the majority of the people were won over to it. Then commenced persecutions. The parliament of Rouen was the murderous tool of a Medicis, and hurled its brands all over the country, wherever freedom of thought dared to display itself. Coligny solicited, at the feet of Francis II., the favour of liberty of conscience in behalf of the unhappy Normans, and the only answer was redoubled persecution, accompanied by redoubled

cries of anguish from the hapless victims in Normandy. The people then rose; the parliament was obliged to flee from Rouen, and fixed its seat at Louviers. Rouen was besieged by the royal troops; the city was taken by storm; and the adherents of the new doctrine again sealed it with their blood. Condé and Coligny found in Normandy the champions with whom they were soon to prescribe laws to the king; and the second governed the whole province beyond Caen, till the peace of Amboise united both armies, in order jointly to drive the English out of Havre. At length, the night of St. Bartholomew permitted the king of France to say: *L'ordre regne maintenant en France*—and subsequently echoes only of the conflict between Catholicism and Protestantism were heard in France: these were at length drowned by the din of a still greater conflict, that began in the schools, was thence transferred to the tribune, the place of election, and the guillotine, and who can tell where it will end! How extensively the Reformation had taken root in Normandy is proved by the circumstance that, after the revocation of the edict of Nantes, no fewer than 185,000 Normans emigrated, and left upwards of 26,000 dwellings untenanted.

The history of Normandy exhibits to us a truth, on which we often stumble in the history of modern times: here above all is demonstrated the vocation of the Germanic principle to propagate itself throughout the world in these days. The sons of the North here come forward with fire and sword; at first we

see nothing but destruction, and men join in one general lamentation, as though the scourge of God had fallen upon them. But the ruins of the towns trampled beneath their feet are not yet cleared away, the ashes of their burned habitations yet reek, and we see the germs of another futurity, the germs of liberty and prosperity, springing up out of the ground; and the cry of affrighted humanity was but the precursor of the shouts of joy, or the silent delight, of the next generation. Normandy *seems* also to confirm the unfitness of the Germanic principle to found a permanent state. After a few centuries, it is true, Normandy, as such, disappeared from history and was merged in that of France. But, if we consider that its continuance was impossible solely because it became a colony of England, and that the relations thence arising averted the views and the interests of a great part of the inhabitants of Normandy from England, and directed them towards France; that lastly, the atrocious stupidity of a John Lackland was the cause, in a far greater degree than any Germanic principle in Normandy, of the reunion of the country with France, that reunion ceases to be an evidence in favour of this notion. England herself exhibits proof of the contrary, proof of the creative and conservative power of the Germanic principle. The original German institutions have there gained the most complete victory; and whatever of foreign growth was retained in the English laws, was not capable of outweighing those institutions or obstructing their progress.

In Germany itself, and in the Germanic states, founded immediately on the ruins of Rome, the sword alone subdued the Romans, but the Germanic principle never permanently conquered the Roman. The empire, the whole structure of the laws in Germany, have ever been more Roman than German; and if this union has proved unprolific, it is because the species coupled together were foreign to each other, and incapable of breeding; merely the consequence of the continued struggle between Rome and Germany, which absorbs the energies and prevents all thoughts of new creations. In France, also, this was long the case; but at length, as the Roman language got the better of that afterwards introduced, so the Roman principle gained the ascendency over the Germanic. It was not till the conclusion of the last century that the latter again entered the lists, and it was more than mimicry if Napoleon thought of Charlemagne. The conflict continues: how it will end is best known to the subterranean powers who spin the thread of human destiny. But assuredly this conflict of two thousand years at least attests the vital energies of the German spirit.

CHAPTER II.

Havre; its appearance bespeaks it to be a new town — Founded by Francis I.—Its Extent—Glance at his history—Its general features — The Quays and Basins — Inhabitants — The Mercantile Class — The Exchange — The Cercle du Commerce—Political Sentiments of the Merchants of Havre.

You need take but a single glance at the plan of Havre to be convinced that it is a new town. Most of the streets are perfectly straight and regularly built. People build in this manner only when they plan towns, not when these are huddled together at random. In ancient times, first one house was built on this spot, then another on that, and so on, till at length the place became a hamlet, a village, a town. In modern days it is frequently the idea of an individual that designs a town, and then constructs it in regular form. Francis I. was the founder of Havre, on the site of which formerly stood only detached fishermen's huts. He meant this town to be a bulwark against the incursions of the English into Normandy; and this object was partially attained, for Havre has been several times cannonaded by the English without effect. His second design in the erection of the new town has, on the other hand, wholly miscarried. It was to

be called Françoisville, and of course to perpetuate his name. But fate and chance willed otherwise; and so the town was first called Notre Dame de Grace, then Havre de Grace—for a time, Havre de Marat; such are the freaks of fortune: Francis I., Notre Dame de Grace, and Marat!—and lastly plain Havre, which is certainly the most characteristic appellation that could be given to it.

The original circumference of the town was much more considerable than the present. It embraced three quarters; that of Notre Dame, the Barres, and Percanville (Parc-en-ville.) During the reign of Henry II. the latter was separated in a great measure from the Barres by a new wall. But in the time of Louis XVI. it was again found necessary to enlarge the town; and the quarter of the Basse-ville was added to it. A second enlargement is now requisite, and it will certainly not be long before the walls are again pulled down to afford greater scope for trade. It is an inconvenience to commerce in general that the town is a fortress.

Many books, and thick ones too, have been written on the history of Havre. But you need only pass through the streets to convince yourself that these smooth houses have no history. Havre is like the plain man of whom his neighbours know neither good nor harm, like the excellent king, whose name is scarcely transmitted to posterity. History is in general but the *chronique scandaleuse* of the world; it knows no more than that there two

nations, egged on by false friends, went to loggerheads; there a mistress squandered away millions; yonder a minister plunged prince and people into endless misery; and yonder again a conqueror built himself a triumphal arch of human sculls. All beyond this is seldom worth mentioning. Havre has witnessed few such scandalous, or, as they are commonly called, historical events. During the wars of the Huguenots, it was delivered up by the followers of the new, or rather the old whitewashed, faith to the English; but, on the conclusion of peace, they joined their former foes to attack the foreigners, and assisted to recover Havre for France. Havre has since been twice or thrice besieged, and two princes were at one time confined in the citadel built by Richelieu. These are nearly all the remarkable events recorded of Havre. The rest of its history revolves round a few thousand ships of war and merchantmen built on its wharfs, so and so many bales of cotton, so and so many hogsheads of sugar, so and so many butts of train oil, and other most peaceable, unhistorical things and occurrences.

Just walk through the streets of the town, and you will perceive still more clearly that it is not old. The last centuries since Francis I. have been more flat, more prosaic, more inexpressive, than any that went before them. All great interests, the people, the church, the faith, had made their exit from history, or passed through their death-struggle in the war of the peasants and in the reformation.

Thenceforward, nothing but the whim of a Louis XIV. or of a courtier, or of a favourite mistress, constituted matter of history, or what people were pleased to call so for three hundred years, till the end of last century. The whole world participated in this vapid frivolity, and whatever was done, whatever was thought and spoken, and even built, bore the impress of this insignificance. At Havre it is stamped in characters not to be mistaken on every house, on the church-doors, and over the altar. The town is an image of the time in which it arose; and whoever is acquainted with the history of that time can tell, without having read a word concerning the history of Havre, the decennium; or at least the century to which every house in the town belongs. Among all the public and private buildings, there is scarcely one that deserves mention on account of its architecture or its history. The mairie, the custom-house, the arsenal, the churches, are just such as one may see every where of the last and the preceding century. The tower of Francis I., which defends the entrance of the harbour, is remarkable only for its colossal walls, and interesting merely for its beautiful prospect and a flag-telegraph, which corresponds with the ships and the observatory on the Hève. The streets are wide and handsome, and the Rue de Paris in particular, the liveliest and the busiest in the town, looks extremely well in an evening, when the inhabitants of Havre parade up and down it by gas-light.

The chief bustle, however, is upon the quays of

the different basins. Of these there are three, besides the Avant-port: the Bassin de la Barre, du Commerce, and du Roi. The first is the largest, the last the smallest. Each of the first two can accommodate about two hundred vessels, and several hundred from all parts of the world are always to be seen in them. As you stroll along these basins, you fancy yourself carried back to the time of the confusion of tongues at the tower of Babel. Here is an Englishman or a German cursing and swearing; there, a Spaniard or an Italian singing a song; yonder a Swede is raising his powerful voice, and a little further a Dutchman pouring forth his foggy language. Be your country what it will, you are here sure to hear the accents of your native tongue. And what a bustle upon these quays! In the Avant-port fishing vessels and steamers are arriving or going out; here passengers are hastening to them, there the friends of those who have just landed come to meet them, and have great trouble to extricate them from the hands of the porters. The fishermen are carrying their nets to their vessels, or unloading the booty of the day. On the quays of the Bassin de la Barre, ships are constantly receiving and delivering their cargoes; a thousand hands are at work, and keep time to the monotonous song of the sailors. Here you mostly see those emigrants who seem to have suffered shipwreck on land, carrying on board the relics of their poverty. On the north side of the Bassin du Commerce the whalers are usually unloaded, and beyond them the timber

vessels; the former you smell at a great distance. On the south side there is a still greater bustle about the ships under repair. Here a vessel is laid flat on her side, there another proudly raises her head, fully equipped to battle with the winds and waves. But one of the most beautiful sights that can be conceived is presented here when the ships are scorched. I know not whether the wood that is used for the purpose, or the tarred oakum that is burned, or the sea-water that is spirted into the fire, communicates such a variety of tints to the flame; but never did I see such beautiful, such brilliant fire as this. Tinged with all the bright-glowing hues of the rainbow, the flames shoot up the sides of the ships to the height of a house, while black, fantastic clouds of smoke whirl around the masts. Fire is frequently one of the most beautiful, most sublime of objects; it is the sport, the dance, the exultation of the fire-spirit escaping from his body; but here the flame is the real poesy of fire, and I ought to be able to write in flames in order duly to describe it.

The quays are the town, the soul of its life, and there you must look about you, there dwell, if you would have any idea of Havre. All the streets around are but suburbs, as it were, but arteries conveying the blood to the heart. Suffice this for the present: I shall have frequent occasion to revert to the heart of Havre.

The inhabitants of Havre, from thirty to thirty-five-thousand souls, are a motley mixture of mer-

chants and traders, seafaring men and labourers, French and foreigners. The mercantile class is naturally the first, and consists of the representatives of all the commercial nations — French, English, Americans, Italians, Swedes, even Russians, and a great number of Germans and Swiss, bustle about on 'Change here and murder the French language more or less successfully. Most of them are solely intent on making their fortune as rapidly as possible, that they may retire from business and live upon their income. They are not at home here; you need but cast a glance at the Exchange to convince yourself of that. This edifice is so small and insignificant that it is incapable of containing the concourse of merchants assembling about four o'clock, so that they are obliged to stand in the open air before the building, and to defy wind and weather —the wind of Havre too! They have been talking for many years of erecting a new Exchange, but the matter is taken up very coolly, and we shall find this quite natural, when we consider that these foreigners regard themselves as merely temporary residents in Havre, which they mean to leave in a few years, and can have no particular interest in making a sacrifice in order to provide an Exchange for the future traders of the town.

Whoever has seen the Exchange of London, Paris, Frankfurt, or other great commercial cities, must be struck at first sight by the contrast between these and that of Havre, incontestably the most important mercantile town in France. The sight of

the Paris Exchange, though generally most repulsive to him who can perceive passion lurking beneath the frigid features, is nevertheless imposing. There stand the generals, and their aid-de-camps fly to and fro, carrying their orders to the commanders on the flanks and in the centre, and hasten back to bring reports and to receive new commissions. There is frequently decided the fate of Europe, and in the noise and tumult you fancy that you hear the cry of nations for succour. A universal slave-market could not be more animated, more striking. The very feeling that here the welfare of the world is at stake, that ministers fall, when the one or the other party gives way, that crowns and thrones depend on the issue of the contest, that nations are put into the balance, produces in the temple of Mammon an impression, which, though awful, is at the same time grand.

In Havre, on the contrary, the Exchange is just like an ant-hill. All wind in and out like a tangled web; none issues orders, none seems to obey. So many bales of cotton are to be had at such or such a price; so many hogsheads of sugar lie at the entrepot, so many are bespoken, and so many on the way. These are interests, it is true, but the world scarcely notices whether a hundred thousand bales of cotton more or less arrive, and at most a hundred manufactories and a few hundred thousand workpeople are immediately concerned in the matter. You might very easily pass the Exchange of Havre without suspecting that the whole mercantile world

of the first commercial town of France was assembled there, or perhaps imagine that the persons whom you saw were merely brought together by some public auction. In this town, the Exchange has not the dramatic any more than the deeply offensive character that it has in great banking cities.

He who would make himself intimately acquainted with the mercantile class of Havre should subscribe to the Cercle du Commerce. If the Exchange is likely to produce a mean opinion of the importance of the commerce of Havre, the Cercle du Commerce makes a very different impression. In one of the finest and largest buildings in the town, handsome and spacious rooms, arranged partly for reading, partly for play, and partly for social conversation, and most splendidly furnished, are open to every stranger who is introduced by one of the members. Here are to be found almost all the newspapers and periodical publications of the capital, several English papers, one German, the Hamburg Börsenhalle, and a tolerably select library. You need not come hither often to discover of what spirit the generation frequenting this place is. To the middle pillar in the principal room is affixed a black board in a handsome gilt frame, with an inscription in gold letters, which gold letters record that twelve or thirteen years ago Louis Philippe, then duke of Orleans, now king of the French, honoured the Cercle du Commerce with his presence. Above this memorial hangs the picture of the king. On the same

place hung seven years ago Louis XVIII., and who can tell who may hang there seven years hence? For the present, however, Louis XVIII. is banished to an adjoining cabinet, where he may hope for better times. The sentiments of the merchant of Havre are extremely loyal, and at the present moment *philippic*, because the king's name is Philip. He is an enemy to every thing that looks like political movement, and frequently belongs to the *furieux de modération*. I happened to be here in 1835, just at the time of the April trials, and recollect a dialogue which took place. "All (the accused) ought to be condemned to death," said one of the peaceable merchants. "All?" replied another, of more moderate sentiments, "that would be severe, nay, cruel." "*N'importe!*" rejoined the first; "at any rate there are no innocent persons among them; they are all monsters and incendiaries." "But, if there should, nevertheless, be an innocent man or two among them?" asked the second, with modest doubt. "I tell you," cried the first, there is not an innocent man among them—'tis impossible. Off with their heads! The galleys would be far too good for such *monstres*."

Here, indeed, much that had been a riddle to me in Paris appeared perfectly clear. I saw what Louis Philippe might reckon upon, and why he went to work with such despatch. But he ought to consider that in the time of the revolution the men of terror in Havre did not deem it necessary to strike off a single head. In this fact there is a

lesson, and a better one than in the sanguinary words dropped at the Cercle du Commerce.

To most of my Parisian friends, all that Fonfrède, the ultra-doctrinaire, wrote and said, appeared inexplicable, and they cried, "C'est un fou!" After I had been at Havre I half comprehended him, and now that I am here a second time, every word is quite clear to me: for here I have found that he is really in his sentiments the representative of a party—that is to say, of commerce. He is a native of a sea-port, I believe Bordeaux, where nearly the same spirit and the same interests predominate as in Havre, and where, of course, people think much the same as here. "We have tried the Chambers long enough, and it is plain that nothing is to be expected of them. Thus far they have done nothing, but they have prevented much good from being done. The whole chamber of deputies is as stupid as possible; nothing but a strong executive government can save France, and the Chamber conceives that it can do nothing better than weaken that, and shackle it more and more. Lawyers have the ascendency in it, and they seek nothing but quirks and quibbles. But, as for us, we want quiet, nothing but quiet; we have plenty of liberty, more than we know what to do with. An enlightened absolutism alone can save France, and secure it from future dangers."

Such are the sentiments which are the order of the day here in the Cercle du Commerce, and are held most certainly by a majority of the mercantile people of this town. They appear, however, like

Fonfrède himself, to place no real confidence in this enlightened absolutism, for the invariable finale of this song, sung in the greatest variety of tunes, is: "ça va mal, et Dieu sait comment ça finira." You see from all this that Fonfrède and the doctrinaires who steered with him under full sail for enlightened absolutism were not building in the air, as it was generally supposed in Paris. How long the edifice would stand if they were suffered to complete it, and whom it would probably bury in its fall, are different questions. I doubt, however, whether the members of the Cercle du Commerce, if they reflected upon the subject, would do any thing but merely cry out the more loudly, "Dieu de Dieu, ça va mal!" for, in the first place, all this has no influence on the prices of cotton, sugar, &c., which, like the *rentes* in Paris, are their political thermometer, the alpha and omega of their social creed, nay, their whole existence.

CHAPTER III.

Commercial Consequence of Havre — Imports — Report of the Committee of the Merchants of Havre on various commercial questions; on the duty on Coal and Corn, and on the future condition of the French West India Colonies—Remarks in the same Report on the importation of Iron; and on the general principles of the French Commercial Code—Contradiction between the political and the commercial principles of the merchants of Havre—Neglect of the local interests of the town by the Government — Proposal for a commercial Congress — Opinion of the Havre Chamber of Commerce on the Sugar Question—Establishment of a Bank at Havre—Cotton Trade.

In the year 1836, goods to the amount of 746,436,000 kilogrammes, and to the value of 643,336,000 francs, passed through the different entrepots in all France. Of these 173,343,000 kilogrammes, and 194,824,000 francs fell to the share of Havre. Of course nearly one fourth in amount, and nearly one third in total value, of all the goods circulated in France pass through Havre. This proportion proves clearly enough the importance of the trade of that town.

Marseilles alone stands in numerical respect above Havre. In the same year the amount of goods which passed through the warehouses of that city

was 316,088,000 kilogrammes, consequently almost one half more than in Havre. The value, on the other hand, was only 201,760,000 francs, so that in this respect the excess in favour of Marseilles was only about seven millions of francs. But what gives greater consequence to Havre than Marseilles is the circumstance that Havre is in the first bloom of youthful prosperity; that it is only in about the last twenty years that it has raised itself to the rank of one of the first commercial towns of France; that it is extending its connexions from year to year, nay, from month to month. Marseilles carries on the French commerce with all the countries contiguous to the Mediterranean; Havre, on the other hand, is for France the entrepot of the whole world, excepting the Mediterranean. Russia, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Holland, Belgium, England, Asia, Africa, and America, send their ships to Havre, as the merchants of Havre send their's to those countries. This trade is increasing every year; and, if of late the same is the case with the Levant, especially by means of Algiers, yet the proportion is very far inferior.

The imports of the principal articles of trade from the year 1833 to 1837 were as follows.

	1833	1834	1835	1836	1837
Cotton	210,598	201,419	214,509	260,286	248,859 bales.
Sugar	50,380	69,430	55,549	45,287	31,783 hhds.
Coffee	14,300,000	15,500,000	15,450,000	17,726,515	18,559,000 pounds.
Rice	14,532	8,258	8,466	11,528	—— casks.
Tobacco	3,236	4,622	5,516	6,350	11,192 hhds.
	—	—	719	1,351	2,865 *billes.*
Potash . American	12,242	10,197	4,684	6,515	7,814 hhds.
Potash . Northern	2,378	758	1,494	1,666	1,389 *futs.*
Indigo . Indian	4,630	5,958	3,614	4,834	3,551 chests.
Indigo . American	490	555	37	36	97 *lurono.*
Dyeing Wood	9,000	9,400	8,950	8,635	5,475 *milliers.*
Mahogany	13,675	15,380	12,640	17,603	20,188 *billes.*
Leather, different sorts	118,094	209,520	180,240	208,390	134,990 skins.
Northern Hides	8,177	13,710	9,684	12,000	21,236 do.
	1,452	5,258	2,493	3,258	3,216 packages.
Tin	13,932	20,370	—	—	27,013 blocks.
Whalebone	16,550	12,362	7,645	11,155	17,708 packages.
Whale Oil	4,400	3,550	5,263	5,660	9,738 *milliers.*
Ivory	1,074	1,550	1,491	499	2,769 teeth.
	—	86	40	26	65 packages.
Foreign Wool	1,052	1,115	6,955	8,510	3,377 bales.

VESSELS AND IMPORTS INTO HAVRE.

Years.	Large Vessels for Foreign Trade.	Weight of Goods.	Coasters.	Weight of Goods.	Total of Vessels.	Total Weight of Goods.
		Tons.		Tons.		Tons.
1828	980	193,233	2,064	104,766	3,044	297,999
1832	1,051	218,520	2,545	170,631	3,596	388,851
1833	889	207,624	2,521	159,093	3,410	366,717
1834	1,054	237,984	2,703	167,211	3,757	405,175
1835	1,181	258,480	2,764	168,250	3,945	426,730
1836	1,297	288,985	2,664	158,269	3,961	447,254

These tables may suffice to afford an idea of the importance of the trade of Havre in general: of cotton I shall treat separately hereafter. It is evidently on the increase. The year 1837 was a severe one, and many merchants in other places fell under the strokes of misfortune. In Havre not a single house of consequence failed; and only a few third or fourth rate firms, which must have sunk even without the crisis, were obliged to suspend their payments. But what furnishes stronger proof of the vital energy of the trade of Havre is that, in spite of this crisis, it was able to extend its connexions, and even to establish in this unfortunate year lines of steam-vessels from Havre to Caen, to Dunkirk, and to Rotterdam, and one, still more distant, to Lisbon.

In the year 1835, the government purposed to frame a new tariff of duties. On this occasion the merchants of Havre appointed a committee, consisting of the élite of the commercial men of that town, to consult upon the interests and wants of the trade of Ha vre in particular, and of the trade of France in general, as well as upon the necessary principles of a new tariff of duties. The sentiments of this committee may be taken without scruple for those of the majority of the mercantile class in Havre; and I shall therefore show what they were from the principal points touched upon in the "Rapport de la Commission commerciale du Havre à ses Commettans," publis hed in October, 1835.

In regard to the coal question, the committee declared that foreign coal ought not to pay any import duty, but only a fee for weighing. In like manner, it decided in favour of the free importation of cast iron and machinery, on payment of a mere toll on weighing. In the same spirit, it unanimously desired an immediate reduction of the duty on foreign iron to 50 francs upon 1000 kilogrammes, remarking that "iron was imported duty-free till 1814; that the alterations then introduced were declared by the government to be only a temporary measure, and that the continuance of the existing import duty was a breach of faith, tending solely to the exclusive benefit of a few, to whose interests it was not right to sacrifice the interest of all; that, lastly, it was a crying injustice to attempt to impose upon a great number of branches of home manufacture the obligation to maintain a competition with similar branches of foreign industry."

As to foreign wool, the committee assented only to an import duty of from four to six per cent. ad valorem. It observes here that in England foreign wool could formerly be imported duty-free; that, on the remonstrance of the owners of flocks, a duty was first imposed in 1802 of *5s. 3d.*, afterwards, in 1813, of *6s. 8d.*, and, lastly, in 1819, of *56s.* per cwt.; the consequence of which has been a considerable diminution in the quantity of cloth exported, and of course a diminution in the consumption and a reduction in the price of native wool.

For imported corn the committee proposed a uni-

form duty for all France of two francs for 100 kilogrammes.

Lastly, the question relative to the future condition of the colonies, a question which the law concerning sugar only rendered more complicated than ever, is thus summed up by the committee:

"1. Shall the *droits differentiels* which France allows for the benefit of the French colonies, as a compensation for the monopoly which France exercises towards those colonies, be abolished, in which case that monopoly itself must be abolished, that is to say, on the one hand, the French colonies shall be at liberty to sell their productions to whomsoever they please, and, on the other hand, all foreign productions shall be permitted to be imported by French ships on paying the same duties as French productions; and, as a necessary consequence, shall our colonies be permitted to import foreign productions in foreign vessels on paying a certain duty, or even without any such duty, in the ships of foreign countries which grant us a like right for their colonies? Or,

"2. If all the conditions of the first part of the preceding question be maintained, shall no restrictions be laid on the trade which our colonies might carry on with foreign countries? that is to say, shall they have a right to import the productions which they require for their consumption from all countries and under every flag without any compensating duties?

"The committee decided affirmatively on the first

part of the first question, and the majority then declared in favour of the extension of the liberty granted in the second, namely, that our colonies should have a right to import all productions requisite for consumption, under any flag whatever, without any *droits differentiels.*"

Thus did the representatives of the mercantile class of Havre pronounce in favour of the commercial emancipation of the colonies. The advocates of this system alleged, as it appears from the statement of the motives for the above decision: "If we wish to release France from the monopoly of the colonies, we desire not this benefit for ourselves alone, for we wish the colonies, on their part, to be emancipated from the monopoly which the mother-country imposes upon them. We wish that our colonies should have liberty to procure unobstructed from foreign commerce all such productions as they need for their consumption, if French commerce cannot supply them cheaper, or at least as cheaply. We desire, further, that the colonies may have a right to sell their own productions, without restriction, to any one who may offer them a higher price, and that they may find in this faculty a prosperity which at present they do not enjoy, and which the manufacture of beet-root sugar is far from promising them, if the system now prevailing be continued."

It fell originally within the plan of the committee to pronounce an opinion respecting the tobacco monopoly, and the writer of the report says in the preamble to it: "The monopoly of tobacco, which

we had considered as a particularly important question, was to be the subject of our last discussions. But, after the enactment of the law which prolongs the existence of this monopoly, and after the resolution since passed by the Chamber to institute an inquiry on this subject, we have thought it right not to pursue the consideration of this question, as it appeared to us undoubted that, if this inquiry takes place — and we hope that it will take place— it will lead to the fulfilment of our wishes on this important subject, that is to say, to the abolition of a monopoly so adverse to all principles, and to the imposition of some other tax that shall satisfy at once the wants of the exchequer and the wishes of the friends to freedom of trade and commerce."

How far the hopes of the committee have hitherto been fulfilled every one knows. The inquiry seems to have lost itself in the bureaus of the Chamber.

To characterise still more strongly the spirit of the Havre commercial committee, and consequently of the trading class there, I shall subjoin a passage or two on the importation of iron, likewise translated from the introduction to the report in question. "The principles now prevailing relative to iron owe their origin to a monstrous abuse of the executive power which fell into the hands of the people of various colours, to whom the events of 1814 consigned the supreme authority in France. Justice to the memory of Louis XVIII. requires us, however, to declare here what is universally known, that this

prince, on his first return to France, was extremely averse to this measure. But it was an affair of too great interest for those to whom we have just adverted not to be pushed forward by them with all their might. The repugnance which Louis XVIII. had manifested to this measure was thus overcome. The king, nevertheless, gave way on this remarkable occasion only on receiving an assurance that this measure should be but temporary, and that it was merely destined to prevent the difficulties in which the proprietors and manufacturers of French iron would be involved by the refusal of a momentary protection. Since then there has been no want of illusions not only for upholding the regulations of 1814, but for aggravating them by a new law issued in 1822.

"What were meanwhile the consequences of this law? Such as the impartial and clear-sighted had foreseen and predicted. The *declared* object of the law was a protection granted to the smelting works; but its *secret* object was a tribute imposed for the benefit of the proprietors of forests and forges. This latter object was attained, and that not only to the injury of the country in general, but also to the injury of the French masters of smelting-houses in particular, who were not themselves owners of the fuel requisite for their business, and who thus found themselves, from the rise in its price, in a much less advantageous situation than they would have been if things had been left on their former footing.

"Against the consequences that must necessarily result from the existing order of things are we to place the regard due to acquired rights? But what, we would ask, is the meaning of acquired rights? We, for our parts, allow no validity to acquired rights, unless they have been rightfully acquired. But we have shewn what is the origin of our present legislation relative to iron, and that the so-called rights of the iron-masters in France rest solely on a manifest and intolerable usurpation. Admitting this, is it not, we ask, trampling under foot all principles, if one would appeal on this question to the respect that is due to acquired rights?"

Such is the language held by the most respectable merchants of Havre! The revolution, democratic principles, are transfused into the life and blood of the French. We shall have frequent occasion to remark this elsewhere in the manufacturers, nay even in the functionaries of the state.

But to return to the report. The committee proposed also a new law of customs, and expressed its sentiments on that subject, as well as on the present regulations, in the introduction to the report.

"If," it is there said, "we examine the existing tariff of the customs, we shall soon convince ourselves that the trade and manufactures of France are governed by a code which is every where at variance with itself, which is based on false principles, and is adverse not only to the general wants

of the country, but also to the interest of private individuals, which the code appears to keep in view.

"In the latter point, for instance, are not the most striking contradictions exhibited by the system of our administration, when, on the one hand, it declares on every occasion that it aims at giving native industry the advantage over foreign, while, on the other, it never ceases to withhold from this industry the most natural means of enabling it to defy competition, inasmuch as it deprives it of those foreign raw materials, the like to which are produced by France, no matter on what conditions? This system has hitherto produced totally different results from what were expected at the time of its adoption.

"On this important subject the Constituent Assembly set an example for true principles; for, in its wisdom, it either wholly exempted raw materials, as well as all articles of subsistence of the great mass, or subjected them to very trifling import duties. The men of that great epoch, while they voted the abolition of all ancient privileges, of which most of them had inherited some from their ancestors, would never have been capable of conceiving the idea of establishing for their own advantage other privileges a hundred times more detrimental to the general interest than those which they had destroyed."

In regard, lastly, to the principles on which a new customs regulation ought to be framed, the committee declared itself,

"1. For an immediate reduction of the import duty on raw materials to a very low rate; and,

"2. For the fixing of a maximum of 20 per cent. for the import duty on all other productions."

From all this I think I may venture to say that the mercantile class of Havre in general espouses the principles of the *progrès* and of free trade; nay, I might go further, and assert that the merchants, who, in every political struggle, have shewn themselves the most decided partisans of the *juste milieu*, who frequently belong, as we have elsewhere seen, to the *furieux de modération*, are, on all commercial questions, real Jacobins, who cannot endure any monopolies or privileges, no matter whether belonging to nobility or *bourgeoisie*, and who do not even respect acquired rights if they have not been rightfully acquired.

Whence this contradiction? Among the parties called forth by the new constitution of things in 1830, the republican soon drove the others into the back-ground; and among the republicans there were individuals who attracted notice by their unpractical principles, some of them dreaming of an absolute equality, others striving to justify the memory of Robespierre. The friends of the government contrived to profit by these views of a portion of the republican party; and soon the majority of the nation, or at least of the *nation officielle*, as the electors are here styled, were republicans, nothing but advocates of the *lex agraria* and the supremacy of the guillotine. So long as the

struggle with the republicans continued, every one, to what opposition soever he belonged, who shewed himself adverse to the government, was regarded as an auxiliary of the republicans and condemned with them.

The commercial world in Havre now saw in the republic a new European war, and had not yet forgotten that, during the wars of Napoleon, grass grew in the streets of the town. It was therefore but natural that the majority should energetically espouse the cause of the government, in the stability of which alone they could expect security for their interests. Thus, in all political struggles they became partisans of the *juste milieu*.

Where, on the other hand, politics were not concerned, people could resign themselves to their feelings, which were governed by the events of the past and by the position of Havre; and then was manifested the real character of the trade of Havre.

The merchants of Havre must necessarily be in their principles the democrats of commerce. They have no manufactories, no forests, no coal and iron-works to represent; they are the agents of all France. It cannot suffice them that one class, even though it were the whole of the *bourgeoisie*, is in a satisfactory state; for if, on the other hand, the great mass is distressed, there is a stagnation in the trade of Havre, which supplies so much as one fourth of the demands of all France; while these decrease or increase according as, not one class, but the whole

mass of the people — not perhaps one million, but all the thirty-two millions of the French—are in a satisfactory state, or not.

Havre must, therefore, be the representative of the public weal of the whole, and as such it will assuredly, in time, display its hostility to the theory of M. Guizot and the government.

The views of the mercantile class of Havre are far more extensive than those of the same class in any of the other commercial towns of France. They stand on the topmost summit of the mountain, and overlook five divisions of the world. In constant intercourse with England and America, they there find patterns, who give them daily fresh lessons on the high interests of trade, and point out to them what urgently requires to be done, or the rocks which they ought to avoid. Hence their notions respecting free trade; hence their enmity to every thing that looks like monopoly and privilege, at least in commerce.

Hence there is every reason to believe that the mercantile class of Havre will really form, in time, an opposition against the government, because its views rest on a totally different basis from those of the latter. The local interests of Havre will perhaps only forward this transformation, as these, of importance to all France, require considerable sums, which, in the present state of things, with a military peace establishment on the war footing, are scarcely to be raised. Havre feels itself cramped by the fortifications, and desires their demolition; but the

engineer department desires that they should be maintained. The basins begin to be inadequate, and, to avoid being obliged to undertake fresh works every ten years, it is necessary at once to commence new ones on a large scale. The trade of Havre, moreover, demands docks, and lastly the sea-sand threatens to choke up the entrance of the harbour, and this produces a necessity for other considerable hydraulic works, dykes, and canals. For many years the trade of Havre has been proposing all these improvements which, in Paris, in committees elected there, investigating there, deciding there, have to encounter the prejudices of the engineers and the officers of the *ponts et chaussées*.

In the report of the Havre committee, to which I have so frequently referred, it proposed that deputies should be sent from all the commercial towns of France to Paris, to form there a congress for the discussion of all disputable commercial questions. This would have been a sort of Constituent Assembly of trade, and, as that effected a political revolution, so would this bring about a commercial revolution. This, too, M. Duchatel, the then minister of commerce, seemed to apprehend; and he preferred consulting the states-general, that is to say, in order to anticipate the democratically-elected commercial congress, the commercial inquiry was instituted by the minister. He wrote at the same time to all the chambers of commerce, to induce them to oppose the election of members of congress, and

this they did with success. But for that proposal of a general congress, originating with Havre, and approved every where else, the inquiry concerning trade, which was destined solely to frustrate that scheme, and has had scarcely any other result, would never have taken place.

But who can answer for it that, precisely on account of the inutility of that inquiry, the idea of a commercial congress may not be again taken up sooner or later, and then a commercial revolution begin? I, for one, would not guarantee this. The Chamber, composed chiefly of land-owners, who are led by the greatest proprietors of woods and iron works, (with the civil list itself at their head) seems at least not to think of the radical reforms demanded by commerce, or if it does think of them, it seems to do so merely for the purpose of rendering them impossible.

But, whatever turn all these matters may take in future, there is no doubt that Havre, from its position, will stedfastly adhere to the principles of free trade.

I cannot quit this subject without adverting to one or two particular circumstances.

The sugar law has lately revived the question of the emancipation of the colonies. The colonies are no longer in a condition to compete with the home-made sugar, and, therefore, applied for permission to dispose of their sugars to other countries. The Havre chamber of commerce, being asked its opinion by the minister, declared itself against this applica-

tion of the colonies. One might hence suppose that the sentiments of the mercantile class of Havre on this subject had changed since 1835, as the above-mentioned committee expressed itself in favour of an almost unlimited commercial emancipation of the colonies. The majority of the merchants of Havre think on this point just as they did three or four years ago. The members of the chamber of commerce, on the contrary, happen most of them to be *personally* interested in the maintenance of the colonial system. The colonies owe large sums to the French merchants, and these are in part periodically paid, or at least covered by goods sent to their creditors. Of course the moment the commercial emancipation of the colonies should be acknowledged, their creditors would lose this their principal guarantee, for the goods would then to a certainty be sent to foreign ports. In the Havre chamber of commerce the creditors of the colonies constitute the majority, and this accounts for the contradiction.

A second important circumstance is the establishment of a Havre bank. The negociations occasioned by this plan, before it was confirmed, are likewise highly characteristic of the spirit prevailing in Havre.

M. Balthazard, secretary to the commercial committee, and writer, in a great measure, of the report of 1835, incontestably one of the cleverest of his profession, and who, moreover, owes his present position to industry and sagacity, proposed three or

four years ago, at the time when the crisis was most severely felt, the erection of a Havre local bank for facilitating the circulation of money. The first-rate merchants could scarcely be pleased to see such a project originate with a trader of the second class, and, therefore, refused to take any share in the bank speculation. The smaller traders, on the other hand, perceived in such a bank a ray of hope, and embraced the plan without hesitation. The provisional shares in the bank soon rose, and in a very short time the millions destined for it were subscribed.

But the commercial aristocracy, which had probably conceived that without its aid a bank could not possibly be established, was displeased at its success, and felt that it was on the point of having the means of its former influence, money, wrested from its hand; and that its consequence would suffer if the enterprize were to be accomplished without it. Its members, therefore, resolved also to issue proposals for a bank on a much more extensive scale than that of M. Balthazard; and, after the latter had arranged with the minister of commerce for the confirmation of his plan, after the Havre chamber of commerce and the bank of France had already given their opinion in favour of it, the commercial aristocracy of Havre published a new project, and the first houses of Havre and Paris, and even many abroad, soon subscribed for —I forget how many hundred millions. This new plan, however, could do no more than delay the first

for a time. In spite of all the efforts of the Paris and Havre bankers, the indefatigable exertions of M. Balthazard and his friends succeeded in establishing the justice of his cause, and in obtaining the confirmation of the proposed bank, on condition that the intended capital should be increased by a few millions for the subscribers to the second project.

This was the victory of the *tiers-état*, or the *bourgeoisie* of the trade of Havre. Till then a certain limited number of wealthy merchants in Havre had taken the lead on every occasion, and been at the head of all matters, as well in the municipal council, as in the chamber of commerce, and the tribunal of commerce. M. Balthazard became director of the bank; the majority of the governors likewise belonged to the middle class of traders. The consequences of this victory soon appeared in other elections, so that a sort of regeneration, as it may be called, has taken place here.

It would be difficult to decide what influence this may have in the sequel for the maintenance of the principles to which I have adverted; but it appears to me that a new generation, with the above-mentioned sentiments, founded on the wants and the position of Havre, cannot be without results for the commerce of that town, and, consequently, the commerce of France.

Among the many branches of trade carried on in Havre, that in cotton is indisputably the most

important, as the following statement will demonstrate.

In the Year	Importation. Bales.		Exportation and Consumption. Bales.	
	France.	Havre.	France.	Havre.
1825	204,572	120,644	216,460	121,644
—6	320,174	214,085	281,001	183,585
—7	290,617	169,274	279,693	166,774
—8	206,132	141,735	239,723	161,235
—9	242,230	175,930	264,780	185,430
—30	282,752	191,186	250,784	163,686
—1	218,393	137,501	243,843	164,501
—2	259,159	184,228	273,463	185,228
—3	305,633	210,593	276,387	193,593
—4	274,307	201,419	301,652	213,419
—5	324,425	214,509	308,736	217,709
—6	397,232	260,286	357,212	233,586
—7	344,186	248,859	360,760	261,359

According to this account, the importation of Havre is to that of all France as about 24 : 34, and the exportation and consumption as 26 : 36. From 1826 to 1837 the importation of cotton increased in all France in the proportion of 20 : 34, and in Havre of 12 : 24; the exportation and consumption in all France from 21 : 36, in Havre from 12 : 26. The importation into all France rose, therefore, 14 : 34, and in Havre 17 : 34; the exportation and the consumption in France 65 : 156, and in Havre 91 : 156. The cotton trade, therefore, is concentrating itself more and more in Havre, and this town will, certainly, be in a short time the only entrepot of that commodity.

The great commercial crisis was particularly felt in this branch of trade. Millions upon millions were lost in Havre alone. It appears as though this crisis had not been the sole cause of these many losses. The circumstance that in 1836 a considerable quantity of cotton was sold, that in this branch the importers gained large sums, caused a certain number of merchants who had never bought cotton before, or who had taken it of the importers, to send their orders to America, so that the number of importers was thereby increased, and the number of purchasers diminished. The productiveness of the last crop in America soon led the purchasers to hope for better prices, and thus the number of the latter became for the moment still smaller, and the embarrassment of the importers so much the greater: the inferior houses were obliged to sell at lower prices, and perhaps, even without the money crisis, there might still have been a cotton crisis in Havre and in Liverpool, where similar circumstances had taken place. The crisis only contributed to increase the embarrassment. Owing to the scarcity of money, the prices of manufactured goods fell, so that they were no longer in proportion with those of the raw material, and the manufactories stopped. The want of money had throughout all France a further result, which was felt the more sensibly here. The great majority of the manufacturers have no floating capital, no ready money, with which they may make their purchases. They are, therefore, obliged, whenever they buy, to carry their bills to the bankers,

and the moment these close their coffers, most of the manufactories must necessarily stand still.

All these things together, and probably there may have been many other causes, explain how it happened that in the first three months of 1837 little more than half the quantity of cotton sold in the corresponding period of the preceding year was disposed of (1836, 109,833 bales; 1837, 66,037 bales.)

We see, moreover, from the above, from the influence of the money crisis, which after all is the principal point, how all things at the present day dovetail into one another, and how the standing still of a single wheel is sufficient to produce a stoppage of the whole curious and complicated machine. Were we to seek the consequences of this idea, the final cause of the commercial events which have of late years shaken the whole world, we should be led to ground that is very slippery, and where it is given to but few to walk with firm step. I shall, therefore, stick to cotton.

At the time when the crisis was at its height, when the cotton speculators frequently lost a hundred thousand francs in one day, and every fresh post threatened them with ruin, I was in the habit of frequenting the Exchange. Not a trace of inward anxiety was perceptible in the manner and behaviour of the merchants. And this pained my heart more than if they had lamented and wept over their misfortunes. What must have been the feelings of these people, while talking with calm, imperturbable

countenance about cotton, it is not difficult to conceive. House and home, wife and family, the gains of twenty years, the hopes of a provision for the future, the portion of a beloved daughter, were at stake, and the explosion of a single failure might involve twenty other houses in ruin. The practised eye of the physiognomist detects traces of such moments in the features of almost every merchant; they are to be found in the hearts of all: for such situations recur too often not to leave indelible marks behind them. Every merchant has thought so often of the possibility of his own ruin, that most can hear of that of a friend, nay even a brother, almost with unconcern. These incessant intense hopes and fears must, in the end, blunt all the humane feelings and almost necessarily turn the merchant into a cold calculator. He has perhaps assisted a friend in distress, and the next hour he receives an account which robs him of all the rest of his property, and plunges him the deeper, as at this moment he has not at his command what he has lent to his friend. He was perhaps humane till he had to do with a swindler or a dupe.

Accuse him not, if he is deaf to the voice of humanity; he has worked in a shop where the constant clank of heavy hammers upon the ringing metal has destroyed his hearing. The shop! the shop! that is the evil; but how to dispense with it, how to render it superfluous, would be a prize question for which the treasures of the most productive gold mine should be offered. But, externally cold as

the merchant appears to us at the moment when his all is at stake, still the disease is raging within. His resolutions at such times are like nervous convulsions. An accidental word is to him a ray of hope, and he seeks and grasps the plank floating upon the waves.

Something like this was witnessed here in the days of the crisis, when M. Balthazard brought forward his bank scheme. Frequently had he before proposed such a bank, but his plan had been disregarded. But now the inferior merchants perceived in it a ray of hope for their depressed situation, and caught eagerly at the idea. Shares soon rose, and then every body wanted to buy. The bank for a moment usurped the place of cotton. Men who saw themselves on the brink of ruin, who were no longer masters of a few thousand francs, subscribed for a hundred or a thousand shares, with a view to sell them in a few days, and with the profit to relieve themselves from their embarrassments. Thus in a short time the requisite millions were subscribed. The bank, therefore, is the legitimate daughter of the money crisis and the cotton crisis.

Upon the whole, cotton here plays the principal part, and much that is said and done may at last easily be translated into the magic word, cotton. The whole town feels this influence, and cotton is the barometer of its prosperity. Bakers and butchers, coffee-houses and wine-houses, labourers and seamen, are only one great galvanic chain, for which cotton is the somewhat material magnetic

spark that runs through and warms it; and when this is wanting every thing is at a stand-still, all lies fallow. The cotton crisis, therefore, was felt in every part of Havre, and not till it was over did the people there begin to breathe more freely.

That almost every thing here may be translated into cotton, I have frequently had occasion to remark in less serious moments, nay, I have even seen persons playing at cards, in the Cercle du Commerce, to avoid saying so many franks, stake a bale of cotton upon a card. The first question and the last, the *ultima ratio* of great part of the Havre world, is cotton. Loyally as they are in general disposed towards the king, they are far more sincerely devoted to cotton; and they would to-morrow change their sentiments and their creed to republican or Mahometan, if the Republic or the Grand Signor could in like manner be translated into cotton, if they were capable of guaranteeing a better price for it and a certain demand for a few years to come. But as this is not exactly possible, they remain what they are, and never swear by any thing higher than "*Nom de coton! vive Louis Philippe!*"

CHAPTER IV.

State of Society at Havre — Esprit in the Capital and the Provinces—Separation of the sexes in company—Arts and Sciences —Havre Literary Society—Public Library—M. Corbière and his Naval Novels—M. Morlents—Archives of Havre—Drouin, the Marine Painter—Musical Mass—A Visit—The Theatre.

We are in the Passion week; Easter, the festival of joy, is at the door, while the snow lies six inches deep on the roofs and in the streets; and on the window-panes the dreams of the night are frozen into flowers and arabesques. Bad weather is every where an unwelcome guest, but in a French provincial town a real misfortune. In all Havre there is not a single reading-room, and in the coffee-houses you hear nothing but the clatter of dominoes on the cold marble tables. In all the towns of France, down to the very smallest, every thing is an imitation of the Paris pattern. What in Paris strikes at least, if it does not attract, by its magnitude or by its novelty, excites in the country, inasmuch as it is a copy, a caricature, of Parisian life, sincere pity, frequently head-ache, and in general yawning and ennui, when a person comes from Paris and has there seen what is new in the country

expire months, nay perhaps years, ago of old age, and helped to escort it to the grave. In a French provincial town, you must either turn hermit, or, what is still worse, domino-player, if you would not die of ennui. It is true that I have as yet lived only in Havre, Rouen, and Nancy, and therefore can speak of these French towns alone—Strasburg is German —but as to the others, I pledge myself that you have there only the above dreadful alternative.

But the societies? O yes, there gushes forth *esprit*. My head yet aches with what I have drunk of it in Paris, and now the bitter-sweet extract drawn from the feuilletons and the reminiscences of the capital and diluted with the water of ennui! I was generally disgusted even in the capital with *esprit*, the ardent spirit of wit, wherever it was served up. In the country it seems still more unpleasant, because it is a worn-out article, that could not be disposed of in Paris. In order to be truly *spirituel*, to make yourself a reputation with the *monde comme il faut*, in Paris with tolerable certainty, in the country without the least doubt, you need only an abundant share of impudence and frivolity, and a glib tongue. Take it into your head to think before you speak, to distinguish yourself, to say something clever and sensible, and you are a ruined man. A story seasoned with some scandal about Monsieur X. or Madame Y., an answer that says neither yes nor no, and which, if possible, shall dispense all the ladies present from exhibiting proofs of their own *esprit*, an ever ready

anecdote, a piece of town news, duly mixed with a sufficient addition of light digestible phrases — this is the best receipt for compounding *esprit*.

Esprit is the fashionable disease of the mind in France, sentimentality of the heart in Germany. Both consume the energies of the man, and are the cankerworm of all that is excellent here and there. The only difference is that spirituality is capable of defending, sentimentality of excusing, every meanness; that the former can make every great action a silly one, and the latter every silly action a great one. If both were placed in the balance, it is difficult to say which scale would sink.

If the French *spirituels* are intolerable to me, the German, on the contrary, are ludicrous. An ape is and remains an ape; and when you watch his antics long and often, the thing becomes extremely tedious; but when a bear attempts to imitate the movements of an ape, the matter then assumes a dangerous complexion; for you must perforce kill yourself with laughing. In the country, societies often made a similar impression upon me with their *esprit;* for they lack the Paris polish, for which one is willing to make at least some allowance. But in general the thing was only tedious, for there is nothing more wearisome than mediocrity. The *spirituels* of the provinces are too good to be always and exclusively used for farce, and too bad to amuse. And what is the worst, you discover but too soon that all is not nature, that it is mere imitation of a Paris fashion, an only half-conceived part, learned by rote from a feuilleton or a review.

A peculiarity in most of the companies of Havre is the strict separation of the men from the women. The latter generally sit at a separate table, and make believe to be working at a piece of embroidery, which they hold in their hands. Meanwhile the men collect in another part of the salon, talk politics, or more frequently about cotton, or play. A magic power seems to keep the men apart from the women, and it is seldom that any one, excepting perhaps a father, ventures to break the spell. This is indeed the very way to make society as intolerable as possible. The reason of this custom is that most of the young men are clerks, and will not or cannot forget even in company the respect due to their employer, to Madame, and to the Demoiselles. Besides, they are mostly foreigners, whose residence at Havre is but temporary. The principals may, therefore, be afraid lest connections should be formed between the young people which would lead to nothing. Be the cause what it may, the effect is as tiresome as possible.

A compensation for such parties of the *monde comme il faut* is to be found here and there in the circle of a family which is independent enough to defy the fashion. I believe that there are not many such, and I esteem myself fortunate to have found in the house of a friend of mine an excellent man, two amiable females, and unsophisticated, childlike children, whose hearts and minds understand and speak the language of nature.

Havre—arts—sciences—what dissonances! Only the first of these notes agrees with the fundamental note—cotton; while the other two give unresolvable sevenths, or other such discords.

But even to the desert island the bird of passage occasionally carries the seed of some good fruit, and thus an ear of corn, perhaps, is found springing up amidst the weeds. This is what I am now about to treat of.

There is in Havre a Literary Society, if you choose to call it so. Its title is *Societé havraise d'etudes diverses*. The number of its regular members amounts to twenty-two, that of its correspondents to twenty-one. It meets twice a month, when papers by different members, and reports on books sent to it, are read. This society publishes annually a kind of summary of its proceedings. From these summaries we see that the society deserves its appellation, for the papers noticed in them are taken quite at random, so that in the report you are carried from Havre to Rouen, perhaps to Poland, or even among the Celts, hear the language of the philosophers on public instruction, morals, and the influence of manufactures upon them; then again a defence of Genesis, remarks on the barometer, the cholera, phrenology, small-pox; by and by a *statistique medicale* of Havre; and we learn that the society, in order not to be behind the age, has its poets, who sometimes philosophize in verse, at others compose lyrics, and, lastly, write fables into the bargain.

It is not my intention to enter here into details,

still less to criticise; for the society seems, notwithstanding the demi-publicity which it gives to its proceedings, to be nothing more than a circle of friends, who wish, on the evenings when they meet, to forget, for a few hours, trade, the school, the sick-room, the hospital, and the law-court. Among the papers, however, there are some which, to judge from a recent report, are of some importance, among others, one by M. Poulain, a Protestant minister, on the concordance of Genesis with the latest discoveries in natural history, and especially the observations of Cuvier.

The traders are in a minority in the society (nine members), and this may perhaps explain how it has happened that the majority has expressed itself very emphatically against the brutalizing of youth in manufactories. At times, however, the spirit of trade manifests itself, as in a debate in which the question was very seriously discussed, whether it is not a misfortune that public instruction should be so widely extended as it is at present; and, to the honour of the majority of the society be it said, this opinion was decidedly rejected.

The small number of the members in general, and of traders in particular, shows how little the need of food for the mind is felt in Havre. Those who do seek it, who founded this society — it is but a few years old—deserve so much the more praise.

On the intellectual life of the town it exercises no influence. Neither, indeed, does this appear to be its object; and therein precisely lies its sentence.

Such a society is but a sort of pastime when it has no higher aim than amusement, when it does not propose a goal to itself, and strive to attain it; and I really think that in the province, and in Havre in particular, it would not be difficult to find an object worthy of the efforts of clever men.

With this *société havraise* I have mentioned nearly all the institutions for the promotion of science that exist in Havre, if I add to it the public library. It consists of many thousand volumes, collected from the convents in the environs. Respecting the history of the town and of Normandy, it contains no works of any importance, but others are to be procured by degrees. I have rarely met with a more kind and courteous librarian than that of Havre — he used frequently to hand round his snuff-box to all the readers in turn — but unfortunately he has not yet been able to make a complete catalogue of the books under his care, so that a full half of the treasures possessed by the library still lies buried there. It is open every day, Sunday excepted, from ten till four, has a convenient reading-room, warmed in winter, in which I have seen at times seven or eight readers, six of them, perhaps, constant visiters, but who came less frequently when there was no occasion to keep a fire.

I made acquaintance with but few of the authors resident here. M. Corbière, editor of the *Journal du Havre*, is celebrated for his naval novels. One of these I have read here. It is entitled *Le Banian*, and the Banian is a Robert Macaire, who goes

abroad, plays his part in the colonies as well as on the continent, has two or three narrow escapes from the gallows, makes a great deal of money, changes his name, returns to France, is elected deputy, and is on the point of marrying a countess, when he is unmasked, retires overwhelmed with disgrace, and at length dies miserably as a *mouchard*. The incidents in this novel, the situations, complications, and developments, the descriptions of various kinds of sea-fish, and the characters, display talent; and if M. Corbière resided in Paris, he would probably act a part in the literature of the day. At present, under the restrictive influence of the capital, which allows him only a kind of passive activity, he is the translator of the land language and land events of Paris into the sea language and sea events of a voyage to the colonies, and of a residence there. The influence of the capital on all intellectual exertion in the country has the effect of not only preventing it from attaining the eminence that it deserves, but of keeping it in continual dependence. Fashion obliges the provinces to dance to the tune that is played in Paris, and thus you hear in the country nothing but the echo of what is going forward in Paris. The majority of the writers in the provinces, unless they possess very strong minds, capable of defying prejudice and custom, and carrying through this defiance, are forced to pay adoration to Paris; they produce nothing original, nothing new, and what they have imagined and written, agreeably to the ideas and form current in the capital, is generally a year

or so too late, as is the case with the fashions followed in Havre and Bordeaux long after they have been superseded by newer ones in Paris.

The works of M. Morlents, editor of the *Revue du Havre*, consist of several small books of travels, which are very unpretending, and to which, for that reason, justice is the more readily done. In point of style and matter, they belong to the better class of travels that one meets with in France.

A *reunion d'honneur de lettres* has been publishing for some time *Archives du Havre, recueil commercial, scientifique, et litteraire.* The numbers that have hitherto appeared afford no reason to expect from it any thing original and independent, though individual articles are not without interest. Neither does any plan seem to have been laid down for this undertaking, for, in the introduction, after a variety of stilted phrases, the editor contents himself with saying that the *Archives du Havre seront celles du progrès*, which is saying as good as nothing, since he takes good care not to tell us what he means by *progrès*.

Such are the scientific ears of corn which some bird of passage has dropped on this desert island.

As to art, I conceived that it was an utter stranger in this country, until I accidentally discovered a painter of whom I shall take more particular notice.

I walked one day along the foot of the Hève, admiring the picturesque grouping of the riven rocks,

and the beautiful and ever-varying prospects of the sea and the town. Here and there a silent fisherman was seen pursuing his occupation in the breakers of the gradually rising flood. Instead of the bustle of the town, I was here surrounded, a league from Havre, by an absolute solitude.

A young man on the shore excited my curiosity. He was standing at a spot where the waves were breaking with a loud noise against two large fragments of rock, and flinging their water, often to the height of a man, into the air. With every advancing wave I saw him bend forward as though to impart to it some secret, and, when it had covered him with its spray, recede a step or two, and, as if it had answered him, write down something upon a paper which he held in his hand. I watched him with astonishment, and it almost seemed as if the story of our forefathers, concerning the love of a knight for a sea-nymph, was re-acting before my face. But I soon began to view the matter with a more prosaic eye, and then my lover of the sea-nymph appeared to me to be some poor fellow who had lost his wits. But for this interpretation the whole affair was too monotonous, and lasted too long. I descended to the beach, and soon stood unperceived behind my knight or lunatic. A fresh wave, which he had again watched in silence with eager looks, obliged him to fall back a few paces, and, when he approached nearer to me, I observed that he looked at his paper, and, uttering a *Ce n'est pas-cela!* in a tone of dissatisfaction, flung it away, and

took another piece from his pocket. I picked up the love-letter to the sea-nymph, and found upon it a drawing in pencil representing the play of the waves in a most admirable manner. It was neither more nor less than a painter, who was here studying and striving to seize the mysteries of the sea.

Civilization oft interposes like a partition wall between men. In Paris, our neighbour in the next room long remains a stranger to us; in a small town people know more of one another; in a village all the inhabitants are relations; and two persons meeting in a desert would instantly shake each other by the hand as cordially as if they were brothers. We, that is to say the painter and I, at the foot of the Hève, on the beach, with the cliff behind and the sea before us, were in a sort of desert, and so we had no need of any particular introduction in order to make acquaintance. After a few questions and answers, the conversation had got into the best possible train. The young painter—he might be about twenty-eight—laughed heartily when I confessed that, misled by the extraordinary way in which he watched the breaking of the waves, I had at the first moment doubted the soundness of his intellects; and told me that the fishermen and labourers had frequently formed the same opinion of him. "For that reason," continued he, "I am obliged to come so far. It is frequently the case that I am amply compensated for my walk, as I have been just now at this spot, where I have been observing for several days past a most peculiar effect of the breaking of

the waves, without having succeeded in seizing and making myself master of the secret." And I actually perceived, when he pointed it out to me, that the sea, as often as it rushed against the two blocks, broke into double waves, and, dashing together on two sides, formed a sort of arch, such as I had never before observed. The painter's sketch showed me, in the first place, how difficult it is to represent this sport of Nature, and, in the second, that I was talking to one who was by no means a novice in his art. After he had kindly invited me to call upon him, and given me his address, I left him alone, that I might not disturb him further in his studies.

In the evening I asked one of my acquaintance, who had a great deal to say about the pictures in the exhibition in Paris, whether he knew Drouin the painter. He replied that some time ago he had known a house-painter of that name, and he had heard that this man actually occupied himself in painting ships for the captains. This somewhat cooled the enthusiasm excited by the sketches and the modest yet manly bearing of the young painter, which had given me a tolerably high opinion of his professional abilities. Nevertheless, on the following day I sought out my new acquaintance.

I was obliged to ascend to the second floor of a third-rate house, where a plainly-dressed young woman, who could scarcely have been brought up in the town, opened the door to me, and ushered me into a small neat apartment. Presently the painter made his appearance in a green linen blouse,

differing from those worn by painters in Paris in this particular only, that it was not stained in a hundred places with colours and oil, but was perfectly clean. After the first salutations, he ushered me into another room, where, as he said, he had installed his youngest child; but this child was a little giant, who already seemed able in his cradle to strangle the serpents of envy and jealousy.

Never, I must confess, had I yet seen the sea so portrayed as here in a picture by the *ci-devant* house-painter. The piece was tolerably large, the largest that Drouin had hitherto painted, five feet wide, and four high. It represents the saving of the Triton steamer, stranded some years ago in the breakers off Havre. The colour of the skeleton of a ship on the stocks in the fore-ground is rather wooden; the beach has the same fault; it is too natural. The artist has not considered that in painting trees one must not paint leaves, and that the beach should be represented as a whole, and not as a vast mass of single pebbles. But all these are faults that are corrected in time, and Drouin will correct them, for in his picture are displayed, where the sea begins, a life, a truth, a study of Nature, such as I have never yet met with in any marine piece of any master's. Many have attempted to represent the sea in a storm; but the waves are in general real mountains, dense and heavy. Drouin, on the contrary, has found out the art of giving them all their elasticity, their play, their transparency, their infinite diversity. The waves

dance in his picture, as on the sea, and, while you look at the piece, you fancy that you hear the exultations into which they break forth whenever they approach the shore. I think I am not saying too much if I predict that Drouin, whose name has never yet been publicly mentioned, will be in ten years the first marine painter of France.

After I had long contemplated the picture, and he had shown me a few smaller landscapes and cattle-pieces, I asked him, I can scarcely tell why, whether Drouin the house-painter was perhaps his father. He replied, laughing: — "Yes, if you choose to call him so, for he brought me up, supported, and took care of me, and furnished me with the means of becoming a painter, supposing that I ever shall be one. But you might misunderstand me: the house-painter stands before you. Poor, and without resources, I chose this trade, because I hoped to find time for the study of the art of painting, which has been my passion from my earliest youth." He then related to me, in the most natural and unaffected manner, how he had lost his father when he was only twelve years old, and thenceforward been obliged to work to support himself and a sick mother. His inclination wavered between the sea and painting, and so he went out at first as cabin-boy, was three years at sea, and during that time made drawings, such as they were, of ships, the sea, churches, and villages, without having ever received any instruction. At last his fondness for painting gained the upper hand; he left the ship,

and went to a house-painter in Rouen, where he soon gained a scanty subsistence, and found time besides to take lessons in drawing. But house-painting was his only school in the art, and in regard to the theory of colours he was entirely his own master. His pictures show traces of this self-instruction; for, admirable as they are in the main point, they want what the French painters term *le chique*. His longing to be near the sea soon carried him back to Havre, and here he rose step by step, at first practising in water-colours, and then making for captains and merchants portraits of their children — for such to them are their ships, to which their hearts are often more strongly attached than to their real offspring—that they might have them continually before their eyes; lastly, painting in oil; and now he stands — as the fact that the amateurs of Havre pay pretty high prices for his pieces, sufficiently proves to those who know any thing of the people of that town—in the vestibule of the temple, where the goddess of Art will not deny the palm to one initiated into it by Nature herself. He will be frequently talked of when he has once broken the ice in which the country envelops every genius in France, when he has once attracted notice in Paris.

I had been told one day that a musical mass would be performed in Notre Dame. Since I have been in France, the term musical mass always produces the same effect upon me as the ranz des vaches

upon a Swiss. I am reminded of the grand and deeply-impressive masses that I have heard in the cathedral of Cologne, and an unbroken series of the most beautiful and sublime recollections passes before my mind. I determined to attend the mass, though I knew beforehand that, from the present state of music in the provinces of France, nothing very excellent was to be expected.

My expectations were surpassed, but, instead of a treat, I received a lesson; for this musical mass sufficed to explain to me at once as clearly as possible the state of religion in France and the spirit of the French and Havre clergy. The church music, the musical mass, was, namely, military or ball music. There is the key to the enigma. And this military church music, with picoli, cornet and piston, trumpets, cymbals, and great drum, played most complacently the ballet music of the scene of the *Pré aux clercs* in Meyerbeer's *Huguenots*, and then a number of galopades and quadrilles by Auber, Julien, and Musard. And they played not amiss, those gallant regimental musicians; and when, just before the elevation of the host, when a quadrille, which I had heard several times at Musard's, and which had pleased me much, was performed, all my fingers itched, and the devil himself tempted me to applaud with all my might, and to shout *Bis! bis!* (encore! encore!) I had some special reasons which deterred me. But the mockery was atrocious, and the dealers in the temple, whom Christ drove out in his just indignation, were a mere

bagatelle, not worth mentioning, in comparison with this military band and these quadrilles. The music seemed to have the same effect upon the legs of the majority of the pious auditors that it had upon my hands; they moved according to the time, and swayed their heads and their bodies to and fro. Was it not the same dances, the same music, which were played a few weeks before at the balls, to which they had danced with such glee, with which were associated the recollections of so many a delightful hour, so many a love-intrigue, so many a tricked husband, with whose fairer half an assignation might be made in whispers during the dance? O! this sacred military music! I became at last quite wicked, and I could have begged the devil's pardon for all the sins that I had ever abstained from committing.

I am not one of those who take offence at the gravity with which the Jewish religion and its offspring, Christianity, have surrounded the idea of God. But, let it not be supposed, by any means, that I participate in the notions of those who regard this world as necessarily a vale of tears, a purgatory in which man must be duly purified before he can be admitted into heaven. The priests of all ages have, with rare exceptions, made an idol of God, a laughing or a cursing idol, according as the one or the other best suited their purpose.

With the idea of a one only God, this God must necessarily become more grave, more sublime, more elevating, and, whoever recognizes this one God in

Nature, or above it, must give this gravity to his divine worship, or he proves that he has no comprehension, not even any feeling, of his own creed. But this is a point which I had no intention to touch upon. The priests in France are Catholics, and none of the most tolerant. And then military music, quadrilles, &c., in church!

A single mass of this kind must be quite sufficient to characterize the religious state of a nation and its clergy. I often heard talk in Paris about a sort of re-awakening of the religious feeling in the people, and I will not question the fact itself. A people without religious feeling would necessarily sink through the grossest materialism into a selfishness, that must dissolve all human ties, that knows neither God nor state, neither society nor family, neither love nor fellow-feeling, and is intent solely on its own gratification. Such a people must perish; and the day when the last spark of its religious feeling expired, would be the day of its death. In France, religion, religious feelings, belief in God and in virtue, had been bound to a certain ceremonial, the mind chained to a form, and thus the ark of the covenant had become God himself. But the priests, who should have watched over that ark, turned it into a coffer, into which they put their treasures. The deception could not be kept up for ever; bold innovators soon laid hold of the ark, shook it, and then the people heard that the God whom they were required to adore was no other than gold and precious stones; they drove away the

guardians of the ark, broke open the money-chest, and divided the treasures among themselves. In many, who, as they had been taught, regarded the ark as God, their belief in God was destroyed along with it. And then ensued a period of infidelity, which still acts upon the mass, the reflecting part, at least, of the French people. But this dreary time could not last, and there is no doubt that at this day the majority of the French feel the need of religion, the need of a belief in God, in justice, and in virtue, deeply, if but vaguely. But they are much mistaken, who, on this account, suppose that some day or other they will again acknowledge the shattered ark for their God.

The vague, undefined feeling of the need of a higher point of support for man led many of the French back to the Church, and what in a great number was a want became for a still greater a fashion. Were the French clergy capable of appreciating this state of things, of paying homage to the wants of the time, and placing themselves in unison with the enlightenment of the age, they might at this moment effect infinite good.

Instead of this, however, they are making a sort of speculation of that feeling, and striving to make it as profitable as possible. They do homage to fashion, give concerts in the churches, turn the temple into a playhouse! and why not? Is not the speculation of Messrs. Musard and Julien one of the best in the capital? As you give twenty sous for admission to their concerts, so you give but two

or four at church, and, after the regimental trumpeters are paid, something handsome is left for the *fabrique*, as the exchequer of the church is here called. But precisely in this calculation is involved the condemnation of the calculators: for you perceive in it, and still more in the means adopted to fill the churches, that they feel not the least concern about the spirit, but merely seek to tickle the senses, of their flocks, that they have no notion of what is stirring among the people, and that they follow the fashion only to make a profit by it. In the capital, all this appeared much less hateful to me, for there one is accustomed to see egotism displayed in its grossest form; but the prevalence of similar practices in the provinces is a proof that it is not the effect of individual aberration, but of a system which is acted upon, unless that simpler, sheepish virtue, which follows whithersoever the bell-wether leads, be the cause of these military music masses.

It was long since any thing had so grievously revolted my inmost soul as this downright mockery of all that is most sacred. I could not get rid the whole day of the impression which this mass had made upon me, and even a walk on the pier, which the weather that day half allowed me to take, failed to efface it.

A visit which I paid towards evening led me into a different train of ideas. France is certainly approaching a moral transformation. The most infallible herald and forerunner of such a change is invariably the demoralisation of the most influential

part of society. I think my word will be taken for the truth of this assertion, but whoever doubts it may seek evidence to the point in history; it may be found without difficulty. But in France the predominant class of society, the higher bourgeoisie, the big wigs of the *juste milieu*, are as corrupt as it is possible to be. The chamber of deputies, its legitimate representative, is actuated solely by the basest self-interest. The appointment of a son or a cousin, the grant of a contract, a privilege, a monopoly, an invitation to a ball at court, and the riband of an order for the wealthy, are sufficient in most cases to secure a majority. A ministry has a majority for or against it, according as it is supposed to possess stability, or, in other words, to have time to fulfil its promises. The mass of the electors is no better, or they would have made a better choice. All this may be perceived still more clearly when we consider what means are employed and suffice in most places to secure the election of the ministerial deputies. In regard to the press, which is likewise a power in modern France, matters are still worse. People know here the fixed price of a laudatory article, of a feuilleton by J. J. and others, just as well as that of a pair of gloves or a nightcap. The press is a real market of consciences, and whoever knows the price and is able to pay it may command those independent gentlemen, with few, and therefore the more honourable, exceptions. Robert Macaire! — yes, he is the hero of the day, and the

truest, the most exquisite type, of the society at present existing in France.

If you would find in France virtue and truth, disinterestedness and self-denial, philanthropy and generosity, you must in general descend to the depths of society, or rather ascend to the third or fourth floor, or to the very garrets. Scarcely any where else do you find people worthy of the name of men. On my first visit to Havre, I had lodged for some months in the second floor of a modest house, with a family for which I conceived such a regard that I could not deny myself the pleasure of calling to see them. The father is overseer of the warehouse of an extensive merchant, and the mother such a one as I used to think was not to be found out of my own country. She worked, and contrived all day, from early in the morning till late at night, to be able to support, bring up, and educate her numerous family, eight fine children, out of her husband's scanty salary. Here I was treated just like one of the family, and once when I was unwell the good mother almost neglected her own children to attend to me. I lived in a room separated merely by a wainscot partition from the whole family, and could hear almost every word that was said in the kitchen, which was their usual abode; never did I hear a cross word between husband and wife, and only at times the earnest and emphatic reproofs of the mother to her children when they had done any thing amiss. Many children are a blessing to a house, says a German proverb, and I was glad

for once to see it verified; for in such a circle of children well brought up, every one is really a blessing of God.

How delighted these good folks were to see me again, and what a treat it was to me to witness their joy! The mother told me that they often talked about me, and I could assure her that I often thought of them. She regretted that her room was just then let, and I was equally sorry for it. She then related that it had been unoccupied for nearly six months, which I thought extraordinary, considering the overflowing population of Havre. But the reason why this had been the case characterises the good woman and also the town; for it was only because all lodgers insisted on being *free* in their own room, which means, in plain English, that they would not comply with the condition not to bring home with them companions of the other sex, that she declined letting it, and chose rather to keep it empty. "The lot of my children is in the hands of God," said she: "I have done all I could to bring them up to be good and virtuous; and if Heaven should decree otherwise, I am resolved not to have to reproach myself with having permitted them to witness bad examples before my own face, and in my own abode." Such a scruple may perhaps appear overstrained even here, but in France it would certainly be thought so by many. But I must confess that it did my heart good, and Providence will, I trust, so order it that she shall not have made the sacrifice, and a great one for her, of some hundred francs, to no purpose.

I had staid so long at my former landlady's that when I reached the theatre a little vaudeville was nearly over. In the interval that elapsed before the commencement of the next piece, I had opportunity to look about me at the house and the audience. The former is built and arranged upon the plan of the Parisian houses, so that it would not be worth while to describe it. The audience was more interesting. Nearly the whole of the pit was occupied by sailors, with perhaps a sprinkle of artisans. In the second tier of boxes were seated chiefly tradesmen's wives and daughters; here and there, in the first tier, was to be seen a lady of the *monde comme il faut;* and lastly the gallery was filled with servants and prostitutes. There was a great deal of noise and fun between the acts. The sailors cracked coarse jokes, whistled, drummed, shouted, when they became impatient. A quarrel took place, and nothing but a challenge *en bonne ordre* put an end to the disturbance in the theatre itself; for then the adversaries, with a dozen of their companions, left the house to settle the affair with such weapons as they had brought into the world with them.

At length commenced the introduction to the *Postillon de Longjumeau*, for that was the piece I was destined to hear to-day. Of the vapid dances to this music, which they call an opera, I shall say nothing, unless that if it is vapid in Paris, it is intolerable here, for it had such a seasoning of dissonances, of false notes, of real wailings, which they are here pleased to call choruses, that it requires a tympanum

like an ass's hide or an ear like that of the sailor's accustomed to the howling of the wind among the rigging, to take the least pleasure in it. Had not the postillion been so exceedingly amusing, my firm determination to stay till the conclusion would certainly have been shaken. But he was so droll as to make amends for all the torment I had to endure. Four feet high and full as much in circumference, this punchy, rubicund little fellow stood beside his mistress, or strutted about like a marshal in the palmy days of Versailles, and sang like a caged nightingale a languishing song, setting forth how irresistible he was, and his good luck with the sex. Irresistible he was indeed, this miniature Falstaff, in postillion's jacket, and I could not help being diverted in spite of my teeth, and laughing heartily, which seemed to scandalize not a little the regular frequenters of the theatre. But enough of him!

More lively scenes are sometimes witnessed in the theatre of Havre. The public is erected into a judge competent to decide on the merits of every new actor or actress that comes out. Whistling signifies "We will not have him;" clapping of hands means, "We are satisfied with him." The commissary of police at length takes the place of the goddess of justice, balances the voices, and decides in the first instance whether the candidate shall be accepted or rejected. Such a popular court is never held at Havre without some dramatic catastrophe. The sailors never fail to take part in the decision, and when they are in the humour to

whistle, it is rather dangerous for any one near them to applaud; for the usual argument, a blow from the hard fist of one of these fellows, is not to be despised. A debut seldom takes place at Havre without a few such weighty arguments; a general row frequently ensues, and then the commissary of police, throwing away the balance of justice, resumes his proper character, draws his sword, calls the bayonets to his assistance, drives friend and foe out of the theatre, and finishes with taking a dozen of the disturbers of the peace, as they are then called, *au violon*. Those who have been drubbed mostly pay the piper.

In Havre, the sailors and the clerks are the umpires. But even if there were more competent judges to pronounce a decision, the theatre of Havre would not be much better, for the traders have other business to mind than to concern themselves about the arts, and besides, Havre is a French provincial town. All science, all art, all the higher and greater interests, have gradually concentrated themselves in Paris, and life in the provinces is thus become a life of downright labour or indulgence. Havre is one of the first commercial towns in Europe, and scarcely a trace of social life on a large scale, of art or science, is to be found in it. The regular theatre at Havre is worse than many strolling companies in other countries, and it is only when from time to time a performer comes from Paris that you can give yourself a real treat, when the Havre actors only form the more harsh a contrast and

manifest the more clearly the absence of all art in the province.

On this occasion, after the play, a few visiters were introduced to the public: some Arabs, who, a few weeks before, had amused Paris to satiety, exhibited their tricks. You cannot help admiring the strength and elasticity of these people, and they alone are sufficient to show what trouble it will cost to subdue a nation that makes such tricks a pastime. But the most interesting thing to me was the youngest child of this Arabian family. The limb and neck breaking feats and tricks performed by this boy, touched me deeply, for he had such a lovely, mild, angelic countenance, that he was certainly formed for something else than a conjuror. Instead of sending civilization to the Arabs in cartouch-boxes, a hundred such children brought up by their parents in Europe, and instructed in our arts and sciences, would very soon civilize all Africa. But in our days the high and mighty are acquainted with but one medium of civilization — *les bajonettes intelligentes.*

But hold! I have got out of the theatre without scarcely knowing how.

CHAPTER V.

Insipidity of Modern Travel — The Traveller advised to visit the Market-places — The Marché des Innocents at Paris — Pugnacious spirit of the Dames des Halles—Market of Havre — The Fishermen — The marketing English — Seafaring People of Havre—Lamentations of the Captains over the abolition of the Flogging Code—Character of the Middle Class of Seafaring Men — The Pilots — The Common Sailors; their brutality; horrible instance of it—The Labouring Class — The Labourers in the Docks — The Calkers — The Ship-Carpenters — The Ordinary Artisans—Separation of the different classes of Operatives.

THE expression — He has travelled — formerly meant a great deal, but has now wholly lost its signification. There are persons who have flown through most of the countries of Europe, who have seen all its capitals, who can talk of every building, every museum, every artist, and who, seen in the sunshine, are as new and as green in this world as though they had never crossed the threshold of their father's house, or at least never passed the boundary of their parish. The diligences, the iron railways, the steam-vessels, are the levers of this progression. People travel a great deal, and while they are travelling they are just as if they were at home. A coach accident, a table d'hôte

story, a reception in a salon — such are almost all the experiences of travel that people bring home with them. I praise the good old times, when a man made his will before he set out from London for Bristol, or from Bristol for Exeter. A fortnight passed on the road, in travelling a distance that is now performed in twelve hours, afforded occasion for making acquaintances, for adventures, for situations, in which it was necessary for the traveller to have all his wits about him. That was the romantic age of travelling. The breaking of a wheel on an almost impassable road was the least that could befal him, and was nothing at all in comparison with a morass in which he stuck fast, because he followed a will-o'the-wisp—a race now utterly extinct. And then only think of an attack of robbers! A classic tedium has crept into travels, I might almost say into the whole of life, since that has been driven from the boards. A simple triad — unity of place, a coach; unity of time, set down in twenty-four hours at the place of destination; unity of action, a commenced but not half spun coach intrigue — has superseded the romantic vicissitudes of chance, the bold and unlooked-for complications and developments of the good old times. Whoever yet wishes, under these circumstances, to learn something by travelling, I advise him in commercial towns to visit the Exchange, in manufacturing towns the public houses to which workmen resort, and every where the church, the school, and the market-place. There he will perhaps learn something, that is to say, if

he has brought with him eyes to see and ears to hear.

Whoever has been in Paris, and has not now and then spent an hour in the Marché des Innocents—the keenest irony that Chance ever devised when it stood godfather at the christening of a place — let him hold his tongue, repent him, and do penance, whenever Paris is talked of in his presence. Here you find an explanation of the epoch when the *dames des halles* played a part in history: here, too, you find an explanation of the revolution, the first, the second, the third that is to come, and of all succeeding revolutions. To a certainty the French would not have been such bold revolutionists, if the women had not shamed them at every step, and forced them to act. In the Marché des Innocents, I doubted not a moment that the women had first raised the flag of insurrection, though it were but one of their aprons, that they defied the bayonets, and, alone and unarmed, confronted the power of a king. For here you every hour see women, in contempt of the armed force and of all the authority of an important officer of the police, displaying a boldness of which scarcely a conception can be formed in any other country, and which even in France might shame all the other sex. In Paris I have often seen men quarrel and abuse one another for half an hour together, without proceeding to any manual demonstration; but here, in the Marché des Innocents, I have occasionally heard women bandy abusive epithets, but only in fun, though, as soon

as it changed to earnest, the battle was well nigh over before I knew that it had begun. Two market women quarrelled one day; I looked another way for a moment, and, when I turned my eyes again to them, behold, one had made a weapon of her wooden shoe, the other of a potato-measure, and both were *hors de combat* from the wounds which they had mutually inflicted in a couple of seconds. The people are the best observers of the people, and they write down in sharp characters the results of their observations in a proverb, in a popular witticism, and thus they say in France: *Les hommes se disputent, les femmes se battent.* Here is abundant matter for philosophizing. I shall merely add — whoever would study the character of the people, let him not miss a market day.

Havre is a commercial town, and, moreover, a sea-port. Its character is comprehended in these two words. Without trade and without the sea, the town would not even exist; and, without the traders and the seafaring people, the rest of the inhabitants of Havre would not be worth mentioning. In the market-place this is as clear as possible. All the attendants of the market, excepting the fishermen, who go thither very early in the morning to sell the booty which they have just brought in, are the most ordinary, every-day creatures that can be conceived; and, often as I have made the tour of the market, much as I have been interested by the variety of fruit, native and foreign, offered for sale by commerce and agriculture, by the inviting culi-

nary vegetables, by the manifold and extraordinary productions of the sea, so little have I been attracted by the people, notwithstanding their Norman costumes, notwithstanding the high helmet-shaped *cauchoise* (cap) of the women. They were all quiet, prosaic buyers and sellers, and I scarcely recollect to have ever seen a quarrel among them, or heard a smart thing said by any of them.

There were but two phenomena in the market that struck me. In the first place, the said fishermen. In the morning, before the regular market begins, they come heavily laden with large flat baskets, in which they bring their fish and shell-fish for sale. A particular person, appointed as it appears by law, frequently acts as salesman; he rings a bell to call the buyers together: but I have often seen the fishermen transact the business in person, and in this matter they always showed themselves worthy of their element and profession. They are accustomed to defy the tempest, to meet it calmly and silently; so, too, they expose their goods, tell the price with one word, let the retail-dealers of both sexes collected around find as much fault as they please with it, and outbid one another, without taking the least notice of the tempest of tongues, till the sum is reached which they consider reasonable, when they deliver their goods, pocket the money, and quietly go their way.

A second not uninteresting phenomenon at the market is that of the English who come to buy. I have often been told, or I have often read, that no

people are so particular about the supply of their table as the English, and I readily believe it, to judge from those who are seen marketing here. With a caution, with a scrutinizing look, that would do honour to the most fastidious gourmand, they examine every cauliflower, every fish. They go regularly through the book that lies open before them, compare the different readings, and, after mature consideration, decide in favour of the turbot on the left, or the soles on the right hand side of the fish-table. How many hours of uneasy digestion must it have cost them to attain this skill. These English are the representatives of a small colony of military and naval officers living here upon half-pay, or of tradesmen who have retired from business with the savings of twenty years. God bless their studies!

The seafaring people form a not inconsiderable class of the inhabitants of Havre. The captains and lieutenants of ships form its aristocracy, the mates, pilots, and fishermen the middle class, and the common sailors the populace, the *canaille.*

The captains have here a particular society, a *Cercle des Capitaines*, in which you meet with a cordial welcome when you are introduced by one of the members. Among this class of seafaring men you find many possessing vigorous minds, often extensive information, and who have of course seen a great deal of the world, but many also who are rude

and uncultivated. It must certainly wound every feeling heart to hear how these men talk of the sailors, and to find that none of them are acquainted with any other means of keeping their crew in order but a rope's end. In the year 1830, ideas more worthy of man prevailed for a few weeks in France, and in consequence the old sea-code, the ordinances of which harmonized with these sentiments of the captains, was abolished. Since that time they are forbidden to strike the men; but, when the captains come upon this subject, you soon perceive that they account it a sort of heroism to assert their omnipotence in a few sound thumps, in spite of the law. At times, too, you hear complaints that, in consequence of the abolition of this punishment, the sailors are already beginning to regard blows as degrading, and to take the part of their maltreated comrades. The captains are mostly petty pachas, who know no law but their own will. At sea this arbitrary power may sometimes be necessary, but to a certainty it has often been abused. I recollect a story of a captain having consigned to the hold a young man who was paying court at the same time with himself to a handsome female passenger, in order to get rid of a troublesome rival, who had thus to perform the greater part of the voyage in the silent company of bales of coffee and hogsheads of sugar; till, on reaching land, a few shots which they exchanged, and a wound which the captain received in the arm, restored things to an equilibrium.

The want of a naval code, or rather of a flogging

code, is the everlasting complaint of the ship-captains of Havre; and most assuredly not a week passes but the Journal du Havre, conducted, as I have already observed, by Corbière, himself a clever seaman, echoes this complaint. All seamen agree that, without flogging, nothing is to be done with the sailors. Almost all the military officers thought the same in regard to the soldiers, and the House of Lords in England is still of the same opinion, though experience in France and Germany has proved the contrary. It is true that a substitute must be found for corporal punishment; it is true that the sailors themselves must first be unbrutalized; and *that* time will arrive, when humanity has learned to interpose an energetic word with the framers of new laws.

The legal abolition of flogging, however, has already operated very beneficially, as I have just remarked. The low moral step on which the sailors stand can alone render this punishment necessary; but when the sailors are once humanized by education and instruction, which have hitherto been denied them, they will themselves take good care to be treated as men. And this is by no means impossible, nay, it would be easy, if governments would establish naval schools, as many of them have established military schools; if they were no longer to permit raw boys, as well as the older sailors, to squander on shore what they have been earning at sea. Let such schools for sailors, in which every ship-boy, while on shore, should daily receive instruction for several hours in reading, writing, and arithmetic, subsist for

but ten years, and the whole profession would be changed. It is only by attacking at its root the brutality of these men, consigned without protection to an almost savage state, that a reform is possible. The outcry for a flogging code is a proof that people see the evil without caring about its source, without thinking of setting about curing it from within.

The middle class of the seafaring people is, as in all others, the kernel of the whole. You often find among the masters, mates, pilots, and fishermen, who compose it, cleverer men than in any other profession. The reader need not take my word for it; let him only turn to the novels by Cooper and other well known naval men. They have run the round of vice and brutality without sinking, and this of itself is a proof of their inward worth. Most of them are ignorant in regard to knowledge acquired at school; few of them can read or write tolerably; on the other hand, they have seen much in their peregrinations, and they have collected a store of practical information, such as is not often to be met with in any other condition. They have, moreover, a feeling, a consciousness, of their manhood, a boldness that is to be acquired only in daily conflict with a mighty element; they are mostly religious, for they have often enough experienced that the strength of man is but as a child's ball in the hand of excited Nature. I have made acquaintance here with a mate and several boatswains, and have no scruple to confess that I should often enough prefer their society to that of a Paris *salon* where the most eminent of

the literary men of the day are assembled. I recollect a circumstance which proves the delicacy of feeling that these tars frequently possess. One of my acquaintance dined here regularly at the same table with several mates and boatswains. The name of one of the latter was Joseph. One day, when my friend had invited me, an altercation arose during dinner between Joseph and a tradesman. The latter had affronted Joseph, I do not recollect how; the seaman, vehemently excited, told him some home truths, rose from his seat, and, by way of clenching his concluding asseveration, struck the table so violently with his sledge-hammer of a fist, as to make all the glasses dance again. He then abruptly withdrew, as though sensible that he had forgotten himself, at least in regard to the other persons present. This was the only time that I ever witnessed any thing of the kind at this table, where I often dined, and where frank cordiality and hearty jokes usually prevailed; and I commended in my own mind that delicacy which had induced the excited seaman to withdraw. But I was still more surprised when, on leaving the house in about an hour, Joseph, who seemed to have been waiting for me, begged me to step aside with him. He declared that he was extremely sorry that he had not been able to control his feelings, and that so he had offended us, and very penitently begged my pardon.

The pilots and fishermen form a particular section of the seafaring class. The former are a distinct body of government servants, appointed to

steer vessels into and out of port, and to hasten to their assistance in storms, amidst the most awful dangers. And their courage urges them still more than their duty, be the peril ever so imminent, to defy the tempest in their small barks, and to fly to the succour of those who are on the brink of destruction. I might call them the priests of the sea, who repair to the dying, not to give them the last blessing, but to inspire them with courage and confidence, but to rescue them at the hazard of their own lives from the cold hand of death, already extended to seize his affrighted prey.

The pilots and fishermen are the most moral and the soundest in body and mind of the whole seafaring class. The reason is simply this—they have families. They are fathers, sons, brothers, and return almost daily to their homes. If any one can doubt the high moral effect of a family, let him but come hither, and compare these pilots and fishermen with the rest of the seamen. Both classes have the like occupation, the like education, live upon the same element, under the same influences, and yet are totally different in their nature: for the family is the temple of morality in this world; here is deposited the germ that is some day to produce sound fruit, and none but the unloving or the surfeited with love can dare to violate this sanctuary.

The sailors are the populace of the seafaring class, I have said the *canaille*, not because I consider populace and *canaille* as synonymous, but because the sailors have really sunk into *canaille*. I doubt

whether there is any lower step on the scale of humanity than that on which the common sailor stands. Most of them are small, stunted, weakly-looking figures. At the first glance you read in the pale features of these unfortunate men, animated only by the glare of a wild eye, the frightful desolation that prevails within. Their life is the most grievous punishment that could possibly be devised; and wo to those who have it in their power to help here, and neglect to help! Every thing concurs to annihilate in these men the better part of man. Without education, without instruction, the boy goes to sea, and enters the school of the grossest depravity. Then his life is divided into two halves; at sea he is exposed to all sorts of privations, and, at the same time, to the most cruel temptations to vice, and often to the brutality of a captain or mate. On shore, he enters upon a life which has for him neither society nor family; incessant labour for many months is succeeded by as long a period of idleness. These are transitions from which even the tried man might not always come off victorious. On their arrival in port, the sailors receive the sum which they have earned in four, six, twelve, and often more months at sea, and with this money they rush into the arms of vice, till they have spent the last farthing.

I have seen some of them, brutes, or what is worse, brutalized men, on whose haggard features satiety was legibly inscribed, and who nevertheless plunged with mad eagerness into new indulgences. I have witnessed here scenes that made my hair stand on

end. I recollect a trial, which presented one of the most hideous pictures that the history of crime ever delineated. Two friends hastened together on their arrival to a public house; and, after passing several days in a state of inebriety, a quarrel arose between them late at night, and they went out of the house to fight. There the two sailors fell upon one another, and eye-witnesses of the fray, who durst not venture out, said that they had heard for several hours the blows and the howling of these worse than wild beasts, till at length, towards morning, all became quiet. On going into the street, they found both the combatants weltering in their blood, one dead, the other dead drunk, exhausted by the battle, and snoring upon the corpse of his late friend. And this corpse presented the most hideous sight that human eye ever beheld, for it was mangled as though by the fangs of a hungry beast of prey. One friend had fastened with his teeth upon the other, and lacerated his flesh till he had sunk dying from his grasp. Would that I could paint this scene in colours of blood, and hold it forth to those who have it in their power to help!

Almost every day one may see battles in Havre, though not terminating so fatally, in which nothing of man but the animal is displayed. They talk a great deal in France about improvements, and reforms, and new schools; but if these are not extended to the lowest stratum of society, they will never change society itself. It seems as though our state architects were not aware that the soil beneath

is full of sloughs and quagmires, and that the fine buildings which they erect upon it are exposed to the pestilential effluvia which rise from them. It is only where the subsoil is sound that those who dwell above it can live in peace, without apprehension of destructive diseases.

The labouring class in all France is that which is least corrupt, in which there is yet a germ that promises fruit for the future. The nobility sunk into utter degradation with Louis XV., and the bourgeoisie has found its *parc aux cerfs* in the Exchange. At this day the labouring class in France is in the same position as the bourgeoisie formerly was; the latter is its aristocracy, as the noblesse formerly was to the bourgeoisie. It finds, or conceives, itself to be thrust back, oppressed; and it is an immutable law of humanity that the oppressed portion of society, that which is incessantly struggling against wrong, is always the better portion; that by this very oppression its better nature is called forth, and becomes steeled in the conflict. The Jews had to pass through the Egyptian bondage before they could have a Moses; and it was from the Babylonish captivity that a Maccabeus sprang forth. The Christians, so long as they were persecuted, were the purest, the noblest, representatives of humanity, and calumny had to invent the grossest absurdities concerning them, because their lives were immaculate. The operatives in France now con-

sider themselves, as the insurrections in Paris and Lyons have sufficiently proved, as oppressed, defrauded of their right. They demand a better position, and it is in the nature of things that every one who demands something better than what is allotted to him must and will strive above all things to show that he is worthy of what is better. This is the key to the secret of the oppressed, of all oppositions against oppression. Hence it is that every where in France you find the operatives, as a class, possessed with a spirit aspiring to something higher, and the majority of them less selfish, less immoral, than those whom they particularly charge with egotism and immorality. Besides, labour of itself has a tendency to moralize, inasmuch as it preserves from excesses.

The labouring class in Havre is divided into two sections, the one consisting of those who are employed in the building and equipment of ships, and who work in the docks and harbours, and ordinary artisans. The labourers in the docks are extremely well off: they receive high wages, but what materially improves their condition is that, in loading and unloading the ships, there is always some perquisite or other falling to their share. Thus they are enabled to supply their families with sugar, coffee, and suchlike articles, and mostly have some of them to spare; this they sell to the retailers, and so make a little money. This the merchants call theft, and I shall not dispute the correctness of the term, but merely observe that they themselves fill

with their samples cellar and kitchen, and sell what these will not hold. Owing to this favourable position, the labourers in the docks are perfectly satisfied with their circumstances, and, consequently, with the government upon the whole.

The calkers form a distinct class, a sort of close corporation, into which they admit as apprentices none but the sons of calkers. They earn about eight francs per day; they consider these high wages as evidence of their merit, and regard their trade, which consists chiefly in paying the seams of ships with tow, coppering their bottoms, &c., as one requiring extraordinary talent. "My Jean is an ass; he'll never be a good calker, and so he shall be a watchmaker." Such was the expression which I once heard used by one of these men who entertain such high notions of their profession.

The ship-carpenters, sailmakers, &c., are in a less favourable position; but they, too, are tolerably well off, and most of them contrive in time to save a little capital, as wind and weather keep them employed all the year round. There are, nevertheless, discontented persons among them, and I became acquainted with such a one, who was a democratic legitimist, in much the same spirit as the Gazette de France. The influence of his circumstances upon him was obvious at the first glance. He was industrious and active, but his earnings did not permit him to procure for his children that instruction which he deemed necessary for them: out of his savings, therefore, he now and then bought a book,

studied it over-night, and what he thus learned himself he taught his children as well as he could. This is an example that frequently occurs among the labouring class in France; and I recollect how deeply I was affected when, at a distribution of the prizes given by the *Association Polytechnique*, after all the scholars had received their prizes, the name of a labourer was called, and one of the teachers informed the assembly that this man, the grey-headed father of a numerous family, unfortunately out of work, regularly attended the lectures, while his children were earning daily bread for him and his sick wife, that he might carry home and communicate what he had learned to his sons and daughters, while at their work, and in their leisure hours. These are traits, which, like straggling sunbeams, promise a better future.

The ordinary artisans in Havre are worse off than in most other towns of France, for no where in France, excepting Paris, is living so dear as in Havre, and labour is not nearly so well paid for in proportion. It is, therefore, no wonder that there should be more discontent among this class of people; and there are, indeed, many artisans in this town who entertain hostile sentiments against the government. In this class, as in every other, there are very meritorious people. But among the artisans in France theory is often carried into action, and then lays violent hands upon the laws. An instance of this kind fell within my knowledge. A journeyman cabinetmaker earned about two francs

per day, and out of this he had to find lodging, food, and clothing for himself, a wife, and five children. A man must be a conjuror to do this in Havre. My cabinetmaker argued in this way: "I am an honest working man, rise early, and go to bed late, and my hands are never idle. My conscience is, therefore, easy when I am not able to pay for what is necessary for my subsistence. As I am resolved not to get into debt with any poor shopkeeper or artisan, I always take lodgings in the house of some man who is well to do in the world, and live there till he turns me out. I have but two beds, one table, and three chairs for seven persons, and the law does not allow my goods to be seized. So my children have bread, and the landlord has only a hundred francs less at the year's end." I had not the heart to condemn him, for distress was inscribed in legible characters upon his face; but I felt that this reasoning is the first link of the chain by which Lacenaire reasoned himself to the scaffold.

But let me quote an instance of the higher aspiration of a working man of Havre. In almost every town there is now among the French operatives one or another who strives to create for himself a literary sphere of action. Thus Havre has its poet in the person of a journeyman tailor, named Contavre Kilbey, who has written a comedy in verse, entitled *Adeline ou la coquetterie*, some extracts from which have appeared in the periodical publications of Havre. If his verses are not above criticism, they

afford at least another proof how assiduously the working class in France is striving to raise itself to a higher step on the scale of society.

The operatives in Havre keep themselves more distinct than in most of the other towns of France. That the different classes of them here can be so easily distinguished, is of itself a peculiar circumstance. It is the natural consequence of the form assumed by society at this place. Almost every class has a particular interest, a particular way of life: the merchants are confined to their counting-houses and the Exchange; the seafaring people are every where a separate body, associating together, and repelling more or less persons of other professions; the labourers in the docks are also totally distinct from the artisans. A consequence of this state, is that much that is antiquated and exclusive, though rooted out of the institutions by the revolution, is still retained in manners and customs. They are still morally, though not legally, divided into guilds, into corps d'état, adhere more closely together than formerly, and celebrate each their peculiar festival every year. Last year I attended two such festivals, that of the smiths on the day of St. ——, what is the name of the patron saint of the smiths? —and that of the cabinetmakers on St. Anne's day. But these feasts deserve a particular description, for which I may perhaps find occasion hereafter.

CHAPTER VI.

Manners and Customs of the People of Havre—Nocturnal Dance—Preliminaries to Marriage—Wedding Festivities—Customs at Funerals—Good Friday—A Quack Doctor—Comparison of his Oratory with that of the political Charlatans—Antoine, the cabinet-maker—Remarks on the French custom of putting out new-born Infants to nurse—Child-birth and Christening.

When we take up the narrative of a traveller who has visited Asia, Africa, America, Australia, or even only Lapland or Turkey, we may be pretty sure that we shall find some interesting particulars relative to the manners and customs of the people. But you would look in vain for any thing of that kind in the works of our modern tourists. They have to attend to matters of much greater importance, to tell us that they dined with his excellency the count, that they had a most interesting conversation with her excellency the countess, or that they toyed with her handsome waiting-maid; that yesterday they were unwell, and therefore we have no letter from them of yesterday's date. In these illustrated works, every thing revolves round the principal person, which, like the ram among a flock of sheep, eclipses and looks down with pity on all about him. But there is another reason why travels, when they treat of civi-

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lized nations, are destitute of every thing characteristic, namely the apparent or real want of character in those nations. They appear at first sight to be all cut out from one pattern, and the differences strike those only who know how to penetrate into the depths of society, which is often as difficult as to descend the shaft of a mine, and in which at times the nicely brushed coat gets sadly soiled. This may be one reason for the omission. I should like a Bedouin or a Chinese to make a tour through the countries of Europe and to give us an account of it. Nothing more is requisite than to stand totally out of the sphere of the daily usages of our somewhat monotonous quarter of the globe to make the matter appear highly interesting. The people of Havre belong to the class of civilized, that is, rounded off, blunted, filed Europeans, and at first sight all these look as much alike as one egg is to another, and it is difficult to discover any thing original, any thing characteristic.

One evening I was returning home late from an excursion in the environs, whistling a tune of my own country. On the other side of the bridge leading over the Bassin du Roi to the quarter of St. François is a tolerably spacious *place*, where the streets of the Quai des Casernes and the Quai de Marimotte, and the Rue Royale terminate. On arriving there, I was not a little surprised to find a large circle of dancers of both sexes, skipping about in a ring to the song of a woman, the *refrain* of which was always repeated in chorus by

the whole party. When the first song was finished, another female began singing another, and so on, the company continually whirling round in a circle, and the number of the dancers gradually increasing, as all who happened to pass that way, whether acquaintances or strangers, joined the ring, and sang and danced along with them. I was myself at last drawn into the sport, when a red-cheeked Norman lass offered me her hand, which I took without hesitation. The wildest mirth prevailed here, and knew neither etiquette nor affectation. Every new song, often full of coarse wit and double-entendres easily understood, gave fresh life to the dance. This lasted perhaps half an hour, when the circle was broken, and the whole motley party, hand in hand, proceeded, hopping and jigging, through the streets to another place, where the round was again formed, and the dance began afresh. Nothing but weariness and the lateness of the hour put an end to the frolic. The ring became gradually smaller, and, when my neighbour too dropped her hand from fatigue, I withdrew also. I accompanied her, and begged her to inform me what was the occasion of this merrimaking. I learned that it was the feast of some saint, whose name I forget, the patron of the bakers, who kept up these sports in the streets in honour of him, after dining and enjoying themselves, likewise in honour of him, at a public-house at Ingouville. I was told that similar festivities took place on the days of the patron-saints of other trades, and afterwards found this confirmed

by experience. I should have no difficulty in tracing back these festivals to Roman and Norman paganism; but this inquiry I reserve for a future prize-question, and content myself for the present with remarking the purely pagan character of the sports of these bacchanalian baker lads and lasses, who, in honour of St. Somebody and his martyrdom and his abstinence, turn night into day, and divine service into a wild frolic.

Besides these festivals, I have occasionally witnessed what had the appearance of characteristic popular customs. Birth, marriage, and burial, are the three principal events of life, and they furnish nations with more especial occasion to express themselves in their peculiar way and manner. But since the march of improvement has begun to trim men here to one uniform pattern, original popular customs are becoming more rare; but a relic of them is still left here and there.

Marriage, for instance, affords the Norman character occasion to display itself more conspicuously. A week or a fortnight before the wedding, the marriage contract is discussed. To this end, the young couple and their parents generally meet at the house of the bride. The young people may, in some cases, marry for love, but the matter is mostly a trading speculation, and the parents seldom regard it in any other light. Accordingly, the marriage contract is discussed precisely as a matter of business; the parents mutually strive to overreach one another; they bargain and dispute, and the

parties stand out about the value of five or ten francs. All that the bride is to receive is first specified, valued, and inserted in the contract, after the old folks have long disputed about the amount, and at last settled that point. Then comes the offer of the parents of the bridegroom, which is generally rejected as insufficient by those of the bride. They strive to obtain first a few thousand francs, then a few hundred, and, if baffled in this, at least fifty, more, till that matter too is settled between them. The conditions in case of death are then arranged, and these mostly stipulate that if either party dies before there is issue of the marriage, his or her portion shall revert to the family. The bridegroom frequently seeks to testify his affection by valuing the furniture and clothes brought by the bride—for every thing is valued to the last stocking — beyond their value, the consequence of which is that, in case of her death under the circumstances just mentioned, a good part of his property passes into the hands of her parents. Several instances were mentioned to me, in which these sold without mercy the property of the poor widower by public auction. Abundance of lawsuits arise out of these contracts, and it would almost seem as though, in drawing them up, the contracting parties had an eye to these suits much more than to the happiness of their children, and were more intent on providing against the former than on securing the latter. I shall have occasion hereafter to notice the fondness of the Normans for litigation.

Great rejoicings are of course made at weddings. Feasting, drinking, singing, and dancing, are necessary concomitants. A pretty general French popular custom is the untying of the garter. Here in Normandy, the bride ties up her stockings with blue and white garters; in Paris, since 1830, they are blue, red, and white: and when dinner is nearly over, one of the party, in Normandy mostly a boy, creeps under the table, unlooses and carries off one of the garters, and exhibits it amidst the cheers and applause of the company; it is then cut into small pieces, and each of the male guests attaches one of them to his buttonhole.

The *garçons* and the *dames d'honneur* are also met with pretty generally throughout all France at weddings. They are the guardians of the bride, and their duty is to take care that her honour does not suffer during the day. Every kiss that the bridegroom gives to the bride is a disgrace for them; and whenever the young couple, who strive to elude their vigilance, can steal a sly embrace, the *garçons* and *dames d'honneur* are exposed to the derision and raillery of all present. But, should the bride and bridegroom contrive, in an unguarded moment, to withdraw secretly, the storm that ensues is tremendous. The official guardians are soundly rated, and they have to search the house, from the cellar to the garret, till they find the transgressors against the code of honour, and bring them back in triumph. This practice is sensible enough, and certainly originated in a commendable popular feeling.

Peculiar customs also take place at funerals. As in many other places in France, the catholic congregation has no hearse; the dead, therefore, are always carried to the grave by bearers appointed for the purpose. This imparts greater solemnity to the funeral processions. The hearse is itself a sort of grave; the coffin is withdrawn by it from our sight, and we already feel ourselves to be separated further from it than when it is borne before us. At Havre you frequently see all the servants, more especially the domestic servants, of the deceased following the corpse; and if this practice is in itself perfectly sensible, it is converted into a farce by the way in which the mourners are dressed up in a broad-brimmed hat with long crape band. After the servants comes sometimes a long train of paupers, who are called *pleureurs*. These mostly carry a large loaf under their arm, to testify to all the world that the deceased thought of them in dying, though perhaps he had made by illicit gains the money which paid for the bread.

Funeral entertainments are met with in Normandy, as almost every where else, and, though now a mockery of sorrow, they owe their origin to the circumstances of former times, when towns were more rare, and when friends and acquaintances came from the country for many leagues round, and naturally had need of refreshment. A peculiar custom here — at least it is new to me — is that of presenting to the priests who attend the funeral a pair of gloves on a large salver: they take them,

quietly put them in their pocket, retaining their own gloves, or even following the procession without any. Thus these reverend pastors are here turned into dealers in gloves, and many a glove given at a funeral may at the next ball grasp the hand of a light-hearted and light-footed fair one threading the mazes of the merry dance. Extremes meet. The protestants have a hearse, and so the whole ceremony passes off in the prosaic Protestant form.

I may further remark that here, as in so many other places, a person cannot die without a capital of from eighty to one hundred francs, if he would be decently put into the ground, and not go upon tick after his death. But enough of the dead; let us return to the living.

Had I not happened to keep a sort of diary since my residence in Havre, there would have been nothing to remind me that to-day is Good Friday. In the streets the usual daily bustle of busy life; the merchants assembled in the open air before the church, by way of 'Change; in the market buyers and sellers haggling as they were yesterday and the day before — all this is so totally different from the quiet of Good Friday in my own country, that one need but walk through the streets of Havre on this day to convince one's-self how rude a shock the Christian religion has received in France. It will be difficult, nay impossible, to restore it; and, though the want of a religious feeling — it is certainly nothing more yet — seems to be spreading among the people, this will only be the field

in which new seed may some day be sown, but which will scarcely impart fresh vigour to a dying plant.

The sacredness of the day, and even a temperature of three degrees below zero, did not prevent a charlatan from offering his goods for sale in the open air in the public market-place. It is characteristic enough that these men are still allowed to carry on their trade in enlightened France, and that they yet find customers. I occasionally heard a wish expressed that the government would put an end to the nuisance; but, to look at the matter in the proper light, this would be a crying injustice; for, since Robert Macaire may become minister, peer, deputy, advocate, physician, and even parson, and has, it is said, at times been all these, it would be a denial of all consanguinity to pretend to stop the trade of these street Macaires. I have often listened to them with pleasure, and admired the natural eloquence of the French. I can assure you that the address delivered by this quack in Havre edified me almost as much as the speeches of Messrs. Guizot, Thiers, and Mauguin have ever done, and perhaps none but those of Messrs. Fulchiron and Bugeaud have given me greater pleasure than that.

I am sorry that I cannot write short-hand, and that the cold did not permit me to take notes. I would otherwise have translated the whole speech, which would be a model of parliamentary eloquence, and shame M. Thiers himself — though perhaps

not. It was made, in regard to form, extemporе, for the speaker set out with assuring his hearers that he would be brief, as the weather would not admit of long speeches, and he had no wish to tire his hearers. "Je serai court; messieurs! je n'abuserai pas des moments precieux de mon estimable et honorable auditoire." I would lay a wager that these golden words of the quack's occur in at least one hundred thousand speeches of the greatest orators of France and England, and in four out of five since 1830 in France. And, to make the resemblance still more striking, the honourable charlatan then commenced a short address, which lasted a good hour.

"Gentlemen," says an orator in the chamber of deputies, "the political sciences have made great advances; new systems have been invented and applied, and we deny not that these have often produced very beneficial results. But shall we on that account underrate the experience of our forefathers; shall we reject the good which our ancestors had the skill to draw forth from the circle of their knowledge? No, gentlemen, let us adhere to ancient experience, tried by the application of a thousand years, whereas, the results of the new have often been very doubtful." I quote here a passage that is to be found on more than a hundred pages of the Moniteur, and refer to the numbers from April 1, 1832-1837. The mountebank said, "Gentlemen, the medical and surgical sciences have made great advances; new systems have been invented

and applied, and I deny not that these have often produced very beneficial results. But shall we on that account underrate the experience of our forefathers, shall we reject the good which our ancestors had the skill to draw forth from the circle of their knowledge? No, gentlemen, let us adhere to experience, tried by the application of a thousand years, whereas, the results of the new have often been very doubtful."

Then the gentlemen in the chamber turn to their portfolio, open it, take out documents and *projets de loi*, and proceed. "Our inquiries concerning the state of France have produced a conviction which nothing can shake, that in the case before us the measures proposed by many members of the chamber, most respectable men, it is true, but hurried into the vortex of innovation, go too far, that they are dangerous, that on the other hand the existing institutions have long ensured the progress of France, that they are founded on the manners and wants of the people, that they will, consequently, have beneficial results, and must not be attacked." "My inquiries concerning the state of the human body," cried our mountebank, holding up and turning over the leaves of an old bulky herbarium, in which were pasted a great variety of plants, "have produced a conviction which nothing can shake, that, in the cases which I shall presently state, the medicines proposed by physicians, most respectable men, it is true, but hurried into the vortex of innovation, go too far, that they are dan-

gerous; that on the other hand the old vegetable remedies, which have for thousands of years protected mankind against diseases, and cured them, are founded in Nature, and must not be attacked." "We have," continues M. Thiers, "studied both systems, compared them, weighed the results, and, experience, always the best touchstone of truth, has invariably pronounced in our favour." "I," said the mountebank, "have studied both systems, compared them, weighed the results, and experience, always the best touchstone of truth, has invariably attested the infallibility of my draught."

I might carry this comparison still further, for our wonder-working doctor said:—"Gentlemen, I am not one of those who offer you a specific for all diseases, like many of my colleagues. Far be it from me to attempt to delude those who grant me their confidence; and it can only be with the intention of deluding that people pretend to have discovered a remedy for all diseases. Death alone cures all evils; yes, gentlemen, and those who have a remedy for all, have formed a league with death. My study of Nature and of diseases of herbs, and of man, has proved to me incontestably that such a remedy for all diseases is impossible." Having spoken in most extraordinary medical terms of the various diseases, the seat of them, &c., he at length said, "I seek, gentlemen, nothing but the truth, nothing but the welfare of mankind, and, therefore, I confine myself to the declaration that the efficacy of my draught is infallible in four cases only, and

the most decisive results" — here he produced a large bottle full of worms, and turned it about in his hand, but without interrupting his speech — "during twenty years' practice have proved, that, in those four cases," holding up the bottle, as if in the attitude of swearing, "its operation is always certain, and immediate." At last, after speaking a long time in the spirit and tone, and with the looks and gestures of parliamentary eloquence, he enumerated the four diseases for which his draught was an infallible cure: these were deafness, complaints of the stomach, rheumatism, and worms. The bottle was his tapeworm trophy, his Vendome-pillar. Taken inwardly, poured into the ear, or rubbed in, the specific operated according to circumstances, and for this wonderful remedy the dear, kind, humane man asked no more than ten sous, say ten sous. That was, certainly, an egregious blunder against all parliamentary usage, and, if I might till then have taken him for some disguised minister, councillor of state, or simple deputy, who was making game of us, the illusion was instantly dispelled. I looked at him with contempt. Ten sous! turned upon my heel, and went my way.

I brought with me to Havre some letters of recommendation, and must confess that they have procured me here and there a very cordial reception and many an agreeable hour. But the acquaintances that are made by accident are of a very different kind. I have become acquainted—I really cannot tell how — with an humble cabinet-

maker, and can affirm that, at his deal table, between him and his excellent wife, I have felt more at home than I ever did in a *salon*. The heart here spoke in prose, clearly and explicitly, and I never had occasion to seek the meaning of any far-fetched *jeu de mots*. "Faites comme nous!" was the usual expression with which Antoine invited me to partake of dinner or supper with him and his wife; and I would oftener have answered, "Je veux bien," had I not feared that I should be troublesome, though I never observed the good people make the least ceremony on my account. And, in those evenings, behind new tables, bedsteads, cots for infants, and furniture of all sorts, piled up there, I have often learned more than by the blazing fire in the richly-decorated drawing-rooms of the *monde comme il faut*, where I had to pay my tribute of ennui, or to endure silent irony.

Yesterday evening I called to see my friend Antoine. His wife, who had the preceding evening presented him with a fine boy, was sitting by the fire. We had been chatting together for full half an hour, and there was nothing to lead me to suspect that this woman had only the day before done a job which usually betrays itself for weeks and months together in every look, every motion, in the appearance and language, of women. There was the same vigour of mind, the same flow of spirits, the same energetic language, as before. While we were talking, the nurse provided for the new citizen of the world entered. She came to fetch the in-

fant. Of all the Parisian, indeed, I might almost say French, customs, none has so firmly established itself as that of transferring infants immediately after their birth to a nurse, banishing them from the paternal home, and depriving them of a mother's care. I was surprised to meet with it in the country, and still more in the house of a sensible, and in other respects clear-sighted artisan, and was glad when, on my putting the question, the mother replied that unfortunately a complaint in her breasts obliged her to comply with the practice. So the things belonging to the little traveller, whose age could yet be reckoned only by hours, were collected. Shirts, napkins, caps, bed-clothes, were packed up and put into a cradle, which served for a box.

I have seen while a boy many a parting, when sons were torn from their mother's arms to be marched off to the army; I have seen some here at the quay, when the loosing of a cable was about to place an ocean between lovers, which have often presented themselves again to my mind in unpleasant dreams; but never did tear make such an impression upon my heart, as that which the young mother brushed from her eye, when she gave a farewell kiss to the babe, to which a few hours before she had given the first kiss of welcome. The infant knew not his mother, could not return her salute, and was already torn from her bosom, to be put to that of a stranger, who only calculated how much she was to earn by her service. Here was affection on one side only, and not even a conscious-

ness, not so much as a presentiment, of that affection on the other. It was a bitter tear that trickled from the eye of the mother, and fell upon her coarse winter corset; and this trial had a greater effect upon her than her bodily sufferings; she motioned her husband to lead me away that she might lie down, for the bed stood in the shop, exposed to wind and weather.

If in France it rarely happens, in Paris and among the higher classes in the provinces scarcely ever, that there is a family, it is mainly owing to this practice of putting infants out to nurse. Whoever considers a family as an incumbrance, as a bar to advancement in life, may deem himself lucky in being without one; for my part, I look upon this as the greatest misfortune. That family-life encourages many prejudices I will not pretend to deny, but by dissolving family-ties you will not destroy those prejudices. On the other hand, without family, all morality, all feeling of one's own worth, and all respect for it in others, would very soon be extinguished; for the family teaches us to feel what is right and wrong, before we learn to comprehend it at school, and it is precisely this feeling that becomes conscience, while the conception leads to conviction only. No sophistry can shake the former, whereas the latter changes according to the reasons that one seeks and finds, or imagines that one finds. This is one of the principal causes of all the evil in France, and Robert Macaire, whom I regard as the most expressive

type of the higher French society of the present day, was to a certainty suckled by a wet nurse, and educated at boarding-school, where he never knew what it was to love a mother, and so very coolly robs his own son, and that too as a matter of right and from conviction, upon the ancient Roman principle, that the son is bound to support his aged father.

While at nurse, the child receives only bodily sustenance, if even sufficient of that, and grows up wild and cold, a stranger to the genial warmth of maternal love. From this unloving state, the child is taken to be consigned to the care of a *bonne*, and again to remain in doubt whether it ought to love the latter or to obey the mother most. From the *bonne* children are transferred to boarding-schools, and here they become acquainted with vice, which springs up in such seminaries for youth like weeds, or is bred like the cankerworm that preys upon the heart and marrow of the tree. Instead of that obedience which parental kindness wins from them, is set up the law of the school, which they do not comprehend—instead of living love, the dead letter. In their teacher they see only a task-master, to cheat, to deceive, whom is their first thought on rising, their last on going to bed, their morning prayer and their evening devotion. Thus educated, the youth—the young man, to use the French expression — at length enters the world, free from control. In every law he sees a repetition of the absurd school system, which he has learned to hate from having borne its fetters for ten years; in every

authority he sees this schoolmaster, who chastised him according to his caprice, and to cheat whom was his delight, his study. Perhaps this consideration alone may suffice to enable us to comprehend how it became so easy for the French to burst all the bonds of ancient usage, and also how difficult — nay impossible, until the fundamental evil is remedied — it will be for them, after overthrowing the old, to build up a new and durable structure.

In France there are persons who have some suspicion of the cause of the evil. Guizot seems at times to have laid his finger upon it; but I would lay a wager that he too has put out his children to nurse, for he sees only the wound, not the source of the complaint, and therefore he could propose a law which was absolutely to tear children from their parents, and to deliver them over for better or worse to the ferule of the schoolmaster. My friend Antoine, to whom I communicated some of these remarks, felt their force, and an emphatic imprecation, on account of the necessity of putting his own child out to nurse, was his affirmative reply.

We soon returned to the room or shop—in regard to space, the Frenchman is the most contented creature in the world—and found his wife snug in bed. Were I a painter, the scene which presented itself would have furnished a good subject for a picture: in the foreground the furniture of all sorts, bedsteads, cots, chairs, tables, piled up, and separated from the background by two high chests of drawers. Behind one of these chests, on the right, the bed,

and around it half a dozen women, old and young, who dropped in one after another to see and to congratulate their neighbour; on the left, my friend Antoine and myself, at the corner of the fireplace, in which was a blazing fire, and upon it a pot standing on a trevet. On one side, the titter, the gossip, the good wishes, and the good advice, of the female visiters to the mother; and, on the other, we two, engaged in earnest conversation on the state of the labouring class in Havre, at times digressing into politics, and presently returning again to the manners and customs of the town: the female attendant going to and fro between the two groupes, sometimes to wait upon the lying-in woman, at others to look after the cookery that was going forward over the fire. It would have made an interesting picture.

When upon the subject of manners and customs in Havre, I asked my friend if any thing remarkable occurred at the birth of a child. He said nothing about the consecrated tapers which are burned in the lying-in chamber, nor about many other things which he might think too common. He told me that the first time the woman goes abroad it is to church, where she receives a blessing, and, at the same time, two loaves are consecrated. One of these goes to the priest, who is paid besides, and the other is kept by the woman, who carries it home, and divides it among her friends and relations, which very properly and justly furnishes occasion for a feast, as even consecrated bread cannot be eaten dry

and without meat. On the day when the young citizen of the world is christened there is another feast, to which only the godfather, godmother, and nearest relatives, besides all the little children of friends and acquaintance, and of the nearest neighbours, are invited, and treated with cakes and sweetmeats. This custom is sensible enough, as the new comer is thus introduced, as it were, into the circle of his relatives, friends, and future playmates. In Lorraine I have met with a counterpart to this custom in particular villages. As here at baptism, so in Lorraine at the funeral of a deceased child, all his playmates are invited, and treated with rice-milk.

While we were thus chatting about one thing or another, the visiters had gradually retired, and I was surprised, on my return home, to find that it was nearly half past ten o'clock.

CHAPTER VII.

The question of Centralisation or Decentralisation — Absolutism of Paris over the Provinces; Examples in illustration of it — Baneful influence of Parisian Centralisation on Morals and on Political Activity—Benefits of Centralisation—Reasons why all the Interests of a Country should not be absorbed by the Capital.

A VITAL question for the futurity of France is that of centralisation, or decentralisation. After the revolution of July, voices were raised in all the provinces against the capital, and the younger and more vigorous portion of their inhabitants arrayed themselves against the absolutism of Paris. Faint echoes of this contest are now but rarely heard; the majority of the advocates of decentralisation seem to despair of the possibility of emancipating their localities from the predominant influence of the capital; but many, even now, believe that the moment is not yet arrived, that Paris still has a vocation for the future to fulfil; while others labour in silence, or look on quietly, in consequence of the political relaxation which has taken place, and of the lesson given to all in the highest quarters downward, both by precept and example, to strive to get rich, and to make a position for themselves.

But the battle is only deferred; it will certainly be fought out sooner or later. The question is propounded, and such questions require only to be started in order to be some day solved. On the other hand, the oppressive tyranny of the capital is too universally diffused, too omnipresent, not to strike any reflecting person at every step.

Let me adduce a few examples in evidence. It is a question at this moment whether Paris shall have a railroad communication with the sea, by Rouen and Havre, and whether the sea shall communicate with Alsace by means of another from Paris to Strasburg. The traders of Rouen desire that this railroad shall be carried no further than Rouen, those of Havre that it may be extended to their town. The question is decided in Paris, but that decision depends not on the interest of the commerce of all France, but on the momentary interest of the predominant party in Paris, and of its friends and adherents. Rouen is politically more important than Havre; the deputies of the former place are more influential than those of the latter; and so all commercial interests, all principles of national economy, which are totally adverse to artificial entrepôts, are thrust into the background; and, though it is not yet decided that the railway shall be carried no further than Rouen by the government, though it is possible that the claims of Havre, founded on the nature and wants of the place, may be recognized in the Chamber, still it is now evident that the government favours Rouen,

and that this preference has for some time past prevented the execution of the plan of a railway.

But wherefore travel so far for an illustration! I was inquiring the other day in all the booksellers' shops for a work printed and published in Caen, a town only twelve leagues distant, to and from which a steamer is going and returning several times in a week, without being able to meet with a copy. When I asked if they could get it for me, they one and all replied: "Yes, if it is to be had of the Paris booksellers." A still more striking instance of this kind is furnished by the novels of M. Corbière, editor of the Journal du Havre. Though he has at his command the principal printing-office in Havre, he nevertheless has his works printed and published in Paris. When I made a remark on this circumstance, he replied: "What am I to do? If I were to get the work printed here, not a creature would read it for that very reason."

In the time of Louis XVI., there lived at Havre a celebrated naturalist, the abbé Diguemarre, to whose merit Paris and London paid homage. When the king was at Havre, he wished to speak to him, and inquired where he lived. Not a creature had ever heard of the existence of such a person as the abbé Diguemarre; the king was obliged to leave the town without finding him, and it was not till his return to Paris that he learned his address, and sent for him. I am very certain that the same sort of thing might occur at this day, and that there are numbers of extremely well-informed persons in

Havre, who would not miss a single *feuilleton* on the subject of the exhibition, and yet do not know that M. Drouin, one of the best marine painters in France, lives just round the corner in the next street, and paints there such pieces as very few of those on whose productions they descant so learnedly could produce.

And then the influence of Parisian centralisation on morals! In the time of the republic, the provinces once strove to maintain a different opinion from the capital, but they have not done so since. With Napoleon people talked here as in Paris about *la gloire;* under the restoration, for a time, with Paris, about the happiness of peace; then, like the capital, they joined the opposition, and now again, like the capital, they pay homage more or less to the principles of Robert Macaire. I am not talking politics here, but morals. As in Paris, so in the provinces, all decent means of rapidly acquiring wealth in order to attain influence, are the grand aim of the majority of the French; and by "decent means" they understand here, as in Paris, all those which do not lead direct to the gallows, and only point the way thither when they have been clumsily employed. In a country where the people are politically active, where they have ambition, this is the necessary effect of a law which makes francs the standard of abilities, civil virtue, loyalty, and merit. As in France every thing may and must be talked about, this principle was formally reduced to a system, and then publicly propounded

before all the world by its champion, M. Guizot, in his celebrated speech at the conclusion of the session of 1837. M. Guizot lays down the principle, M. Thiers carries it into practice, and, through the influence of the capital, the principle and the example are propagated throughout all France. Everywhere the same striving after wealth, everywhere the same cunning in the employment of means, reverence of nothing, neither father nor mother, neither God nor virtue, and attention paid only to the sharp limits of the law, in order to avoid the sword of justice. In Havre every question involving the welfare of mankind is only a question about the price of cotton, as in Paris about the rise or fall of the *rentes*. As in Paris, literature and the press are in the provinces—if, however, they exist there at all—a question of money; and writers attack or espouse the cause of the government, according as they expect to gain a certain number of subscribers and purchasers for their papers and works. I need scarcely observe that there are exceptions, and exceptions the more honourable, inasmuch as they risk their influence, defy the fashion, and make themselves a laughing-stock. But I am speaking of the rule.

This state of things is natural, for it is the curse of a bad government that it makes the people bad. I do not suppose that all this is done purposely, neither is it necessary that it should be: where a pestilential wind blows, one has no need to poison one's self—the thing is done for one.

It will always and under all circumstances be in the end a misfortune if political activity is entirely concentrated in one place. This concentration must very soon create in the centre a vast, disproportionately populous city. But in great cities interests clash too much; intrigue, deception itself, obtains too important an influence not to corrupt in a short time the whole population, with rare exceptions. By means of the centralisation this corruption is communicated to the whole nation. Rome furnishes on this point a warning example, and unless sooner or later a new political or moral revolution rouses the spirit of independence in the provinces, and the unnatural centralisation of Paris is destroyed by means of it, France will be ruined by Paris as the Roman empire was by Rome.

There are epochs in which this centralisation is a benefit, in which it is necessary. But for this, France never could have withstood the assault of the whole world at the end of the last century. One may say, on the other hand, that, but for this, she never could have been conquered in the way she was in 1814 and 1815. But for this again, the revolution of July would have been impossible; at any rate, it could not have been accomplished in three days. On the contrary, but for this, the moral impulsion given to the whole nation by the revolution of July could not have been so annihilated and in so short a time. There is no perhaps in the case.

Against the external and the internal enemy, a

centralisation of the power of the state is necessary, but I cannot help thinking that this might be effected without any necessity for the whole intellectual and moral power of a nation being absorbed in a single point. A nation that has no political centre is not a nation in a political point of view. A centre, therefore, is necessary, if a nation shall keep up in the eyes of the world the character of a nation; if it shall not lose by degrees the consciousness of its existence as such: it is necessary in order to oppose the foreign foe with energy and effect.

But this centre of the political power of the nation is only necessary for its representation as a nation. All other interests, those of art, science, commerce, nay, even jurisprudence and legislation, are not necessarily attached to the centre; on the contrary, it is necessary for their independence, for their generalisation, that they should be at a distance from the perturbing influence of a movement, which mostly has but one direction. France would be an infinite gainer, if she had good schools of art in the provincial towns, if her best high schools were not in Paris, if her principal Exchange were at Havre or Marseilles, her Court of Cassation at Orleans, her Chamber of Deputies at Tours or Lyons. In many respects, it is true, such an arrangement would render business complicated, but it would spread the vital energies and activity throughout all France; it would infuse sound juices into the different branches of the tree; whereas at present the trunk is surrounded only by rank climbing

plants, and the boughs are without either leaves or fruit.

In Paris, I am aware, minds rub together, and the collision frequently produces something great and beautiful. Perhaps France would not have made such advances in particular branches of knowledge and the arts, if Paris had not collected such a multitude of thinkers. But this is only a factitious improvement, which finds no echo in the mass of the people, and there only is there any real improvement where this becomes the property of the nation. Of what benefit was it to Greece and Rome that individual thinkers were thousands of years in advance of their age, while the mass of the people remained in ignorance? That only which becomes general property through the natural channels promotes the prosperity of the whole. We are yet posed by the same riddle which Plato and Socrates of yore sought to solve, and have scarcely advanced any further towards the solution, because it lies beyond the limits of our nature. But if our age has advanced further than that of Rome and Greece, it is because many thousands now know what was then known only to individuals, not because we know a great deal more than they did.

I have not referred at all to purely provincial interests, for it requires very little penetration to perceive how gross an absurdity it is that people should decide in Paris whether Lyons or Toulon shall have a savings bank, whether they shall be allowed to establish any bank at all, to construct a

railway to the next town, or merely to build a school and to appoint a schoolmaster.

All great capitals are a misfortune for a country; but Paris is a running wound, which, unless the knife some day cuts away the proud flesh, will sooner or later drain France of all her strength. —Rome and Paris!

CHAPTER VIII.

Havre, the point of embarkation for German Emigrants to America—Contempt of the people of Havre for the Emigrants—Causes of the disposition of the Germans to emigrate—Contrast between the German and the French Peasant—Manœuvres of Germans resident at Havre for fleecing the Emigrants—Tricks of Houses which make the equipment of Emigrants their special business—Greediness of German Consuls at Havre—Distressing consequences resulting from these causes.

HAVRE is a colony to which all the commercial nations have more or less sent their representatives. Hence there is scarcely a civilized or half civilized language but meets the ear occasionally on the promenades and in the coffee-houses; and there is no town in France where the smart language of the country is so dreadfully mangled. The Germans are very numerous, and besides those resident here, some thousands of emigrants are arriving almost every fortnight. These have drawn a great number of German publicans, retail shopkeepers, and brokers, to the town, and very often the wives and children, sometimes whole families, of German emigrants stay behind, so that the number of the resident Germans is continually increasing.

One evening, walking on the quays after the

people had left work, I heard the sound of a violin playing a waltz on board one of the ships, and occasionally the loud *Juchhei* of German peasants. I do not recollect to have ever heard this in France, even when the dance was ever so obstreperous. These must be Germans; and so I made my way across several vessels till I reached the one on the deck of which a whole German cargo were dancing to the instrument of a village fiddler from Rhenish Bavaria. The ship was to sail the next day, and all the emigrants, lads, lasses, men, women and children, were dancing in the highest spirits, as though they had been at a fair.

I have several times seen German emigrants wiping the big tears from their heavy eyes when the ship was passing the quay, and they waved their adieu to a friend who was to sail in another vessel on the next or the succeeding day. I once saw a young woman tear open her neckerchief to relieve her oppressed bosom, and with the exclamation of "My mother! my poor mother!" push aside her husband, who held out to her their infant six months old. And, on another occasion, I saw a native of the Black Forest, who had endeavoured to drown his sorrow by drinking, leap upon the gunwale, and with an emphatic imprecation consign all Germany and *Amtmann* N. to the bottom of the sea, in doing which he knocked off his fur cap, which fell into the water, and he had well nigh tumbled after it. All the spectators on the jetty, and even the majority of the emigrants, laughed

heartily at this scene, and had been wholly unmoved at the former; but I was deeply affected by both. All this, however, was nothing to the joyous passengers on board the ship just ready to start. These people were leaving their native land, house and home, the spot where they had played as boys, where they had loved as youths, where as men they had listened with delight to the prattle of their first-born: and nothing, nothing indicated that they had turned their backs for ever on all that was most sacred, that they had abandoned the graves of their fathers, that they had sold the cradles of their children. They danced, they made merry. *Juchhei!* that was a mirth!

What is the name of that country, unfortunate enough to give birth to such sons, still more unfortunate to account for and to justify such indifference? I know it well, I know the people of South Germany, with a heart that threatens to break, when home-sickness courses like a burning fever through the veins, and the bosom is ready to burst. And yet these people emigrate, and dance, and make merry, on the very evening before their departure!

Here, in Havre, I never heard the poorest labourer, the meanest sailor, speak otherwise than with contempt of the Germans, or rather of the *Suisses*, as they are here called, because formerly a Swiss regiment which spoke German was stationed in Havre—and this sentiment extends to the middle and in part also to the higher class. I was silenced,

whenever I attempted to defend them, by the reply: "But why do they emigrate? We French would rather live at home on a crust of bread, than anywhere else in plenty. What sort of a country must that be which people can forsake, like these Suisses!"

Germany is one of the finest countries in the world. It abounds in every thing, and yet such is the distress that it forces thousands every year to seek another climate, in order that the torments of a hell upon earth may not deprive them of the hope of a heaven hereafter, or make them doubt the existence of a ruling Providence. Let any one explain this if he can. I am often told that it is owing to German curiosity, which is anxious to know what is beyond the mountains and across the sea, and which drives them with a sort of eagerness into foreign countries. I have felt this kind of curiosity myself; it has driven me too from my country over hill and dale; but a word, the accidental mention of the name of a place where I have been happy, the sound of a bell resembling that of the church near which I once dwelt, the chirp of a bird, a dream, a mere nothing, are frequently sufficient to awaken a very different sort of longing, and to send my spirit a-travelling homeward. The fondness for travel drives us abroad; the longing for home draws us back with irresistible force into the arms of our kindred, and chains us to the spot where we sported as boys, where we first perceived that we had a heart in our bosoms. Precisely this contradiction

is the German character, but neither one nor the other alone.

People talk of the everlasting migrations of the German tribes, in order to account for the emigration of the poor peasants to America. But these migrations were invariably in the main the effect of one and the same cause. All those tribes of Germans—Saxons, Franks, Normans, or by whatever names they may be called—had not room enough in their native land; they knew not what to do or how to live; they grasped their swords, and sought a new country, because they would not starve in the old one. Such is the case at the present day. Nothing but distress, present misery, and the prospect of a darker future, compels these unfortunate people to bid a joyful adieu to their fondly loved native land, and to seek to live by their labour in a far distant country.

The sufferings of many centuries are to be read in the features of these people, and the more distinctly when you see them along with French peasants and labourers. In the countenances and looks of the French sailors you frequently perceive characteristic traits of their moral depravity; and this is observable at times, though of late less frequently, and only by way of exception, even in the working people in towns. But put a French peasant, of either sex, beside a German, and they form as great a contrast as the master beside his servant, the mistress beside her maid. In every look, every attitude, every motion of the French

peasants, male and female, there is always a certain grace; they cast down their eyes before no man, be he who he may; they are never at a loss for an answer; they know that they need fear nobody, that the law for them is the law for their superiors. German awkwardness is become proverbial, and its cause is generally sought deeper than it lies. A feeling of independence is the antidote, and whence is the German peasant and artisan to derive this? Whoever doubts what I say, let him place a German, who from his youth has lived in the higher circles of society, beside a Frenchman, and I am certain that very often the former will not be the more awkward of the two.

I have a hundred times made the observation that the German peasant is not only heavier, duller, clumsier, than the French peasant, who is always graceful in comparison with him, but that he is also uglier: in the women this difference is particularly striking. The German tribes once had the reputation of being one of the finest races of men. The Romans thought no women more beautiful than the golden-haired German, and they were connoisseurs and had their choice. Even at the present day, you see in the towns of Germany, among the higher and middle classes, more really handsome women than in France. On the other hand, I scarcely recollect having seen among the German emigrants one woman who was qualified to compete in this respect with the wives of the working men here, or with the market-women and the female peasants. They are

the most wretched, the scum of the peasantry of individual provinces of Germany, who have had to struggle all their lives with distress and misery, and on that account the ugliest.

To the spectator of any nation, and to a German in particular, it is a painful sight to see such a caravan of emigrants, in which the gray hair of the grandfather and the inarticulate tones of the infant speak a language which rends the heart. But if these poor creatures excite profound compassion, there is another class of their countrymen here of whom one cannot speak but with abhorrence. To these the unfortunate emigrants are an object of speculation, whom they contrive by every possible artifice to strip of the last farthing, of the last shirt upon their back. The Germans who keep lodging-houses here are, with rare exceptions, intriguers and bankrupts, many of whom the fear of punishment has forced to leave their native country. Most of the emigrants, as they understand not a word of French, are completely at their mercy, and every bushel of potatoes, every joint of meat, that they buy, must pay toll to these their countrymen, who offer their services out of pure philanthropy. The poor wretches do not purchase an article of any kind without being grossly cheated, the agent and the seller, who know one another, sharing the gain. A German Jew, who had settled here, sold to almost every emigrant who had a few dollars left, a watch, according as the buyer was richer or poorer, for 100, 50, 30, 10 francs, and even still less, one-

half at least of which was profit, so that he made from ten to fifteen thousand francs a year, and often more. A watchmaker, to whom he was accustomed to refer as to the worth of the watch, received five francs for every one that he sold. In printed instructions for the emigrants, they were told that watches were much dearer in America than in Europe; and our German Hebrew demonstrated as clearly as possible that the wisest thing they could do would be to turn the rest of their money into watches. After the poor peasant had thus been duly prepared by himself or his colleagues, he came at the last moment with his watches, and sold to such as took the bait at such a price as each could afford to pay; and the warranted watch usually went at least till the ship had left Havre. I know a watchmaker here, of whom the Jew bought old chains and other parts, out of which he put the works together. This traffic, however, seems likely to be checked by another, for it is now said that fowling-pieces are more advantageous than watches, and so a trade in them has commenced, which is carried on in the same manner as that in watches has been. These are but solitary instances of the way in which the emigrants are treated in regard to every thing that they buy here. In a few days or a few hours the ocean parts buyer and seller, and effectually prevents all complaint.

There are several houses here which make the equipment of emigrants their particular business. One of them is connected with the packets, which

sail pretty regularly, and therefore has some advantage over the rest. On the whole, however, one is as good as another, that is to say, the emigrants are cheated and swindled by most of them. Some of them have their recruiting offices on the frontiers of France and Germany. There the different agents outdo one another in the terms which they offer, and promise the emigrants all that they can desire. But in the contract, which is always in French, there is not a word about these terms, and to this contract they are referred when they have at length arrived here. It specifies, in general, that they shall have a passage in such or such a ship, or in *some other*, and so they are obliged to wait mostly for weeks, four, six, eight, in a town where living is very dear, and where, moreover, every thing is contrived to fleece them, till the ship so and so, or *some other*, is ready to sail. The provisions stipulated in these contracts are reckoned by kilogrammes, but with the agents a kilogramme is twice as heavy as here in the warehouses of the contractors; and as the poor, ignorant German peasants cannot accustom themselves to this weight, the overseers of the warehouses mostly find means to filch several per cent. more from each sort of provisions for themselves and their masters. The greater part of the emigrants are therefore in general obliged to lay in a supplementary stock here at their own expence.

It is scarcely possible to carry a complaint against this conduct into court, as the contracts mostly allow the outfitters all possible latitude.

But if such a complaint were possible and valid in law, it is scarcely practicable in fact. The German peasant knows not a word of the language of the country; he must, therefore, employ a deputy, and would thus be certain to fall into the hands of a new bloodsucker. Then again, the contractors are on the best terms with the police-officers, sergeants, and gensdarmes, with whom they are in daily intercourse, and the higher officers of justice have not time to attend to such bagatelles.

The German consuls, whose duty it is to protect their countrymen, have in general other and far more important business to mind. But truth requires me to declare that M. Meinel, the Bavarian consul, has on several occasions warmly interested himself on behalf of his countrymen, and bettered their condition by his interference. I am not aware of any similar interference on the part of the other consuls, but will not affirm that no such instance has occurred. One of these consuls, representing several German states, and among the rest one of the larger states of North Germany, is known to the emigrants from those countries only by their each being obliged to pay him, out of the little that his countrymen have left them here, two francs for his *Visa*, out of which those who transact the business for them make three. The consulship is thus become an office that produces a yearly income of five or six thousand francs, and frequently more. If the wretch who steals and plunders at a fire deserves to be flung without trial into the flames, he

who robs an emigrant, or who merely enriches himself at the expence of the latter, ought at least to be keel-hauled under the ship that is to carry him out. Such a law in the spirit of Draco would be justifiable before God and the world, whatever the sentimentality of our times might have to allege against it.

Owing to the manner in which the emigrants are imposed upon at the frontiers, it is very often the case that whole families, who have spent their all on the journey, are compelled, on their arrival here, to beg provisions and other necessaries, if they would not lose the money which they have paid for their passage. They are often obliged to stop here for a year together to earn sufficient to pay for their fare; and in many cases the mothers and children stay behind; while the father alone proceeds in the hope of soon saving enough in America to pay for their passage. It happens not unfrequently that, while they are labouring here to earn their bread, the truly German fondness for travel subsides, and they settle quietly in this place. Occasionally, the women seek to earn money in a different way, and the wholly neglected children, excluded from school by poverty and ignorance of the language, run wild and roam about on the quays, in order that, by petty thefts from the goods which are unloading, they may help to raise the sum required for their passage. The attention of the French Government being at length directed to this circumstance, orders were issued that a passport for emigration should not be

granted to any person who was not possessed of a sufficient sum to defray the expence of the journey through France and the passage. But the consequences of this ordinance only added to the embarrassments of the hapless wanderers. The agents themselves advised them to borrow the requisite sum, and referred them to officious friends; and thus the emigrants had often enough to pay on the frontiers 30, 40, 50 francs, for the sum of 300, 600, 900 francs, advanced to them, according to the magnitude of their families, for a few hours, by Jewish extortioners, and of course arrived so much the more destitute in Havre.

From all these facts it is easy to infer why Germany and the Germans stand so low in the estimation of the common people of this country. There is a way to put an end to this emigration, but to propose it would only excite a smile of pity in those who have the power to help. If, however, it cannot be prevented, it would be a work worthy of a philanthropist, of a German who loves his country and his kind, if he were to employ his capital — and he would risk nothing in doing so — in transporting these unfortunate creatures as cheaply and as safely as possible to America. But perhaps this proposal too may draw only a smile of pity from all those who feel themselves above such trifles.

CHAPTER IX.

Views of the Sea — The Pier at Havre — Scenes to be witnessed there — La folle Marguerite — Sea-water Baths — Pleasures of Sea-Bathing—Nature of the Beach—Promiscuous Bathing of the Sexes; Instances in which fatal accidents have been prevented by it—Dangerous Surf.

THE first time that I beheld the sea, it made a very different impression upon me from what I had anticipated. The sky was overcast, not a breath of air was stirring, and the sea lay a wide waste before me. The longer I contemplated this inanimate mass, the more a feeling of awe stole over me. On the morrow, a vivifying breath swept over this dead mass, and where the preceding day all was dreary and still as in a sandy desert, joyous waves were now dancing, and driving one another along. Near the shore they ran rippling to the beach, dashed upon it with a shout of victory, and rolled back noisily over the gravel. And they sported with the barks which the hardihood of man had consigned to them, at one time lifting them high into the air, and then hurling them down as deep. And then all the vessels going in and out, yielding to the impulse of the waves, like proud swans upon their

lakes; and those distant sails, hovering like sea-gulls at the horizon, and those gulls which imagination converted into vessels!

And the next day I went again to the shore. Heavy clouds covered the face of heaven, and lay like a pall upon the sea; and here and there in this dun veil was a rent, through which burst the bright rays of the sun. The wind howled over the sea, and lashed the waves so that they reared themselves high into the air, and dropped snorting down again. Wo to the vessel that had not reached the harbour, and was between the mighty combatants—wind and water! I watched this combat, and heard the broken cry of horror raised by the seamen, when the furious element dashed the ship against the pier, and she went to pieces. Not content with having conquered those who had boldly defied their vehemence, the billows rolled over the shattered vessel, as an enraged combatant tramples upon a vanquished adversary after he has struck him to the ground. And when the wind at length ceased to lash the sea, the latter continued to grumble for many hours, and was the more awful as the howling of the one no longer indicated the cause of the commotion of the other.

A few days afterwards I went again to the shore. All was calm and still. I now comprehended the grandeur of this calmness; and it no longer produced the unpleasant impression of a boundless desert of sand, for I was now aware of the omnipotence of the giant, and knew that he was only slumbering.

All this, indeed, is mere words; but here are combined life, ever-varying life, terrible greatness, and tranquil sublimity. And in this variety, in this union of the great, the terrible, the sublime, in this awe-exciting conflict, succeeded by the profoundest repose, lies the charm.

And then evening, and the setting sun, and night! I have missed few sunsets since I have been in Havre, and have not seen one which was like yesterday's. But wherefore describe how the sun sinks into the sea, how it borders the horizon with gold, and how the gold-edged clouds are reflected in the mirror of the sky? To what purpose describe how the stars disport and dance to and fro in the flood; how the moon throws a silver streak across it, and how all this forms an exquisite charm, to which the creations of the most glowing oriental imagination appear cold and inanimate? And then the phosphorescent waves of a summer night, which surround the belated bark, light her way, and mark her track! I have seen a hundred, a thousand, marine pieces, and it is precisely this, which cannot be painted, that produces the variety, the life, that creates with every movement a new world.

Whenever the flood-tide permits the entrance and departure of ships, the pier is thronged. Many are only spectators of this great drama. It was some days before I comprehended it, its fable, and its moral; and so long I too was one of the idle spectators. The entering and departing ships excited my feelings, and the pictures which they presented

were beautiful, but only pictures. But one day I heard near me a sigh, and saw a glistening tear in the eye of a young female. All then became clearer, and I comprehended that these beautiful pictures, the sea, and the ships, and the sails, animated by the wind, were only the background, only accessories of the drama that is here developed before the mind's eye; and then I became one of the performers, nay the leader of them. There stood a man in the best years of life, who had once been handsome and vigorous, and directed his telescope to the horizon of the sea. His features betrayed a passion that distorted them; for lust of gain is more terrible than any other, and destroys both soul and body. He was mentally calculating what he might win or lose; and uncertainty, hope, and fear, were contending in his heart, without any of them being able to gain the victory. Not far from him stood another, who, having for a while directed his tube first to one point, then to another, at length fixed it upon an object which engrossed his whole attention. His face brightened up, and became every moment more animated, till at last he lowered the telescope, and silently, but with triumph in every look, bent his way with rapid step towards the town. Who knows what might depend on the arrival of the vessel! perhaps the happiness of a beloved daughter; perhaps the return of a hopeful son; perhaps the ease of the last days of a grey-headed father, weary of life; perhaps, too, only the momentary gratification of a never to be satiated appetite for gain. Yonder

stood a woman bowed with age, supported by the arm of a young female. They were poor, their dress proved it, and they were even unable to give wings by means of a telescope to their looks and their anxious longing. But their eyes were directed to the distance, and sought out every sail that appeared above the far horizon. I saw them frequently afterwards standing there mute and full of care, and soon knew that they were the mother and bride of a sailor, whose ship ought long since to have arrived. Every evening they returned home with disappointed hopes; and one day, when I had read in the papers of the loss of a Havre vessel, I looked for them with prophetic fears, but looked in vain. They came no more to the pier.

The departing vessels were saluted by many of the persons present. Here stood a father shouting a last adieu to his son; there a mother extending her arms in anguish towards the child of her affection, from whom she was to be parted; yonder a wife holding up her prattling infant, that the father might see it once more. And who could answer for it that all these were not the greetings of everlasting farewell!

The most touching scene that I ever beheld I witnessed here at the first flood-tide, after a tremendous storm. The pier swarmed with people, and most of them were the relatives of the fishermen, who had been overtaken by the storm while out at sea. Who can describe the extacies of joy with which here and there a woman and children de-

scried in the distance the sail of their father, their husband, their brother! or, when the vessel was near enough, the cordial greetings of relations and friends! But who can conceive the agony which this very joy contributed to paint on the faces of those whose eyes looked in vain for the objects of their anxiety! With the arrival of each boat, the number of persons assembled on the pier decreased, for they hastened away to press to their bosoms those who were preserved to them. At length all the vessels and boats hastening in from right and left had entered. The sea gradually retired, and very few of the crowd collected there an hour before were left. These had in vain scrutinized with wistful looks every sail, every boat, every vessel. Hope gave place to despair, which was expressed in tones and gestures that cut me to the heart. Mothers and children stood weeping in silence, or sobbing aloud, or stedfastly gazing with tearful eyes on the sea in the distance, as though to wring from it an answer to the question: Where is my lover, my husband, my father, my son? And the wave murmured quietly past—an awful grave, upon which not even a mound or a cross can be a wretched consolation to the unfortunate survivors.

Never shall I forget this scene, and while I lived in Havre I was most painfully reminded of it from time to time by a woman. One evening profound silence reigned around me. I was standing here, admiring the calmness of the sea, the luminous appearance of the waves, and the dancing of the

moonbeams in the liquid plain, when I heard close to me a shriek, the utter disconsolateness of which pierced me to the soul. It was such a burst of horrid joy as demons may be supposed to vent at times amid their torments. *La folle Marguerite* stood behind me, and, when I turned about, I saw her throwing bits of wood into the sea, heard her mutter incoherent words about flowers and roses, and frequently repeat the name of George. And at intervals rang that cutting cry of despair, which told the cruel story of a wounded heart, of a brain consumed by the flames of love, and by grief. Often in my most frightful dreams have I since heard this shriek. The very thought of it is enough to give me a sleepless night.

Just above the Jetée du Nord are the Bains Frascati. Here you may have sea-water baths at all seasons of the year. But during the *saison* you bathe in the open air, for which purpose there are upon the beach below the building machines in which you undress. A considerable distance further is another bathing-house, which is less brilliant, but more frequented. In the former you meet chiefly with foreigners, or with such residents at Havre as wish to keep themselves apart from the multitude; the latter has at least the advantage of being more lively.

There is scarcely a higher enjoyment on earth than sea-bathing, and with it are connected my most delightful recollections of the sea. It ought to be rather rough, but not too high, just so boisterous

that one may venture in without danger, or with very little danger, and then a luxury worthy of the gods awaits us. On such a day scarcely are we up to the knees in the water, when a wave, breaking against the shore, carries us along with it into the midst of the sportive billows. We lie quietly for a moment between two waves, as in a dell enclosed on all sides, above us the clear sky, around us the moveable wall of waters. The next wave then approaches at a steady pace: its head, adorned with curling locks of foam, or crowned by the play of the sunbeams with flowers and brilliants, bows itself before us, and lifts us up to the top of the little hill of water, lets us rest here a few seconds, and enjoy the prospect that opens around, which shows us the beautiful country, the playful swimmers and bathers, the distant shipping, and the still more distant horizon; till it slips from beneath us, and again leaves us lying between two liquid hills. Again it lifts us up, and again throws us down; and we need scarcely move an arm in this element, to enjoy the delight which we have imagined in our happiest dreams of riding upon fleecy clouds, of flying through the waves.

The pleasure of the bathers and swimmers varies like the sea itself. I was often alone, and then, when I swam through the waves, when I lay between two liquid hills, amid the mighty element, the feeling of loneliness would sometimes steal upon me, and excite a passing apprehension; but yet I could not break the spell. Often, too, there were hundreds

along with me, and I was delighted with the cheerfulness which the bracing element produced in all, with the frolics of the swimmers, with the alarms of the fair bathers, with the care with which the father watched over his little ones, and lastly, with the confidence in the invigorating effect of the salt water expressed in the countenance of every invalid. As, however, Havre is not a regular bathing-place, the number of persons of the latter class is in general small: they were here only to prove the astonishing efficacy of the sea in this respect also; for I know a woman who came at the beginning of the bathing-season upon crutches, and who at three weeks' end might have hung them up at the altar of Neptune, as evidences of the miracle that he had wrought.

At high and low water the scene is always changed. At ebb-tide, the sea is bordered by a plain of sand a thousand and often more paces in breadth, and this plain, warmed by the sun, the bathers must cross, to get to the water and back from it to their machines; and I have seen scarcely any, with the exception of a few sickly persons, who, either before or after bathing, failed to make it the theatre of their sports and gambols. This sandy plain continues to slope imperceptibly into the sea, and thus at ebb-tide you may walk several hundred feet into the water before it is up to your breast. An immense space is thus allowed to the bathers, and they disperse themselves in all directions as far as their courage or their stature permits. At flood-tide, on the contrary, the descent from

the shore is abrupt, and thus the sphere of their movements is much more circumscribed. The men, and occasionally women too, who can swim, venture, indeed, somewhat further; but those who have not learned that useful art stand, especially when the sea runs rather high, in long rows, holding by ropes fastened to posts, where the leaping waves break over them, and frequently dash on beyond the last in the row.

Men and women bathe here together, and I really cannot see that there is any thing objectionable in this practice. The women wear bathing-dresses of the most modest fashion, to which a ball dress is absolute nudity. Sometimes the playful waves will draw out a pin or untie a string, and then you may perhaps see the beautiful curve of a white shoulder, and the fair owner of course blushes as though she did not expose a great deal more to every eye when Fashion pleases to command her.

From my own experience on several occasions, I have found that the bathing together of the sexes was a lucky circumstance. The sea is at times treacherous. During the ebb, it always draws you away to a distance, and you have great difficulty to reach the shore again, when you have ventured out too far. One day, a beautiful English woman, too confident in the dominion which her country assumes over this element, had swum to some distance into the sea, and when she attempted to return her strength soon failed her in the unwonted exertion. Her cry for help made such an impression

on the ladies present that they immediately hurried out of the water, to watch in safety from the shore the tragic event that was preparing, while others loudly echoed her call. Two young men, the only swimmers present, who were already in their machines, sallied forth instantaneously, plunged into the water, and in a few minutes brought the fair stranger, half dead with fright, if nothing else, in triumph to the shore. On the following day, one of these two, a friend of mine, had the good fortune to save three ladies at once. This time it was flood-tide, which is mischievous too, and was trying whether it could succeed better in catching its prey than the ebb had done the day before. At the place where the flood has reached its highest point, it generally scoops out the ground to the depth of some feet. Beyond this hollow commences the level sandy beach, which I have described above. On that day, three young ladies had been bathing quietly on this plain while the flood was gradually rising. When they attempted to return to the shore, the water in this hollow was above their heads and cut off their retreat. The nearer they approached the shore, the deeper the water became. Cries of distress were their only resource. The ladies on the shore ran in their alarm to and fro, and the cry for help, echoed from every mouth, was all the assistance they could afford. My friend came up just at this moment, and if, on the preceding day, he had forgotten to put on his bathing drawers, he had now forgotten to fling off the

gown, plunged into the sea, and brought to shore the three females, who had already lost their footing when he reached them. A few seconds later and they must have perished.—On account of such accidents, let men and women continue to bathe together, as they have hitherto done.

Another danger, but only for such as are somewhat too bold, and prefer a rather rough sea for bathing, is the surf. One day, when the sea did not appear to me rougher than usual, being fond of its agitation, I had confidently consigned myself to it, and indulged in the delightful exercise of flying swimming, or swimming flying. My heart had rejoiced in the joyousness of the billows. It did not occur to me that I was alone, and that most of those who had come to bathe had been deterred from venturing; for the luxury of the enjoyment was too great for me to think of any thing else. But when I wanted to return to the shore, I soon perceived why I was the only bather. Either the sea was higher when I went into the water than it had been the day before, or it had become more stormy while I was bathing. Be this as it may, when I attempted to reach the shore, every time that I gained a footing, the surf upset and flung me into the next wave. The first time I laughed along with the spectators standing on the shore; so I did the second time, but the laugh was not quite so hearty; at a third attempt, I began to feel uncomfortable and ceased laughing; and the fourth time I was on the point of pronouncing an emphatic

curse upon the laughers, when a fresh wave enveloped me and cut short the imprecation. In this manner, I made ten or twelve attempts to gain the shore, but to no purpose, and at every fresh trial the sea became more agitated—at least so it seemed to me—and the harsh voice of the waves more jeering. I felt that I should not be able to continue the conflict much longer. To recover myself, I swam back out of the surf, and not till then did I bethink me of the ropes, and could not conceive how it happened that they had not occurred to me at first. I swam to the spot where there was one of these, waited till a retreating wave allowed me to perceive it, and with its assistance reached the shore, the sea breaking over me several times by the way. I must confess that I was heartily glad when I once more had terra firma under me, and could stand upright, and that I seriously resolved to be more cautious in future. To this resolution I have stedfastly adhered, though it has often grieved me to the heart to be obliged to deny myself the luxury of a stormy sea-bath.

CHAPTER X.

Environs of Havre—The Shipbuilders' Yards—Francis I—Le Perry—The Quarter of the Gobelins—Cemetery of the Protestants—St. Adresse—Anecdote of Bernardin de St. Pierre—La Hève—The Lighthouses—Cemetery of the Catholics—Graville—Church-Music—Convent of Graville—Advice of Pierre Legardin—The Côte d'Ingouville; a place of great resort in May for the purpose of drinking milk before breakfast—Ingouville — The Hospital.

The bright sun, shining into my bed-room, invited me out early this morning. I had long wished to revisit some places which I had already seen; and where I had paid homage to that God who lives in Nature, and through it draws nigh unto us. My route led me out by the gate of Le Perrey to the sea-shore. The sea was tranquil, and rejoiced with me at the sight of the smiling face of that glorious luminary which had been so long veiled from us. In the road lay a great number of vessels; and among them five whalers, which had sailed eight, ten, and twelve months ago, and the crews of which had lived all that time in their nut-shells between sky and ocean. The last that had arrived was celebrating the happy termination of her voyage, and by firing her guns proclaiming her return to friends

and relations dwelling in the town. Unluckily, I too often have witnessed the brutal joy of these seamen returning home after a twelvemonth's absence, to indulge those poetical feelings which these gladsome sounds would otherwise have excited in my mind. The thought, however, that in one or other of the cabins of Le Perrey the heart of a fond mother might throb more vehemently at the sound of these guns, somewhat cheered me and diverted me from my moody meditations. But, to a certainty, many more prostitutes of Havre were waiting with impatience for the landing of the crew, than mothers, sisters, and sweethearts.

My morning-walk led me along the sea-shore towards the north, and, in the first place, past the shipbuilders' yards. Here the sturdy carpenters were already at work, and clambering about the skeletons of the future conquerors of the terrible element. The bustle that prevails in these yards is always a pleasing sight. The half-finished vessels, the destiny which awaits them, which brings happiness or misery upon so many families, and which bids them traverse the ocean amid perils and tempests, give wide scope to the imagination. On the strand, close to the stocks, lay the wreck of an old vessel, which had been driven ashore by the last storm, and from which workmen were tearing the shattered planks to be used for fuel. Thus, all through life, the cradle and the coffin are close together.

Upon the stocks here are born the giants of the

deep. They are there christened, and these christenings are truly jovial scenes. The godfather, the godmother, and all the friends of the parent, celebrate the auspicious day; and I doubt much whether most of the shipbuilders and shipowners look forward, at the birth and baptism of a son or daughter, with such joy and hope as at the birth and baptism of a child, not sprung from their own loins, but created and animated by the breath of their soul—money. And I would lay any wager that a shipowner would be far more shocked to hear of the wreck of his ship—that is to say, if she were not insured—than to stand before the wreck of what was once his son. The great shipowners who have large families of this kind are not so fond of them as those who have but one child, the fishermen, for instance, who live on board from year's end to year's end, and come on shore only from time to time. These dote upon their vessels; every plank is endeared to them; they become identified with their boat; and, let the storm rage ever so furiously, they will not quit her till the inexorable element assails her with a force that defies resistance. I have known some such fishermen, who, having lost their vessels, dragged out the remainder of their lives in profound melancholy, or strove to drown their sorrow for the loss by addicting themselves to drink. One I saw who had actually lost his reason; who, in his mental aberration, lamented over his vessel as a forsaken woman would over her faithless lover, whose desertion has broken her heart but not distracted

her brain. I know not whether this ought to be called the force of habit; but a terrible idea often darted across my mind, when I saw how men, the imaginary gods of the earth, are attached to a plank, and how the lofty mind, which has the presumption to attempt to control the raging element, is wrecked when that plank is shattered against a rock.

In this dockyard that gallant monarch, Francis I. caused a colossal ship of war to be built, which was to perpetuate his name upon the sea, as Havre was to do upon land. But the sea was not more favourable to this royal perpetuity than terra firma. The giant vessel, Francis I., in which were a chapel, a foundry, cellars, and kitchens, and even a windmill, performed the long voyage, from the spot where she was built to the entrance of the harbour, about a thousand paces, and was stranded there upon the sand, where the scornful waves played with the windmill of royal perpetuity, till one day, becoming furious, they dashed the ship in pieces, and cast the wreck upon the shore. The sand of the sea, though driven hither and thither by the flood, is permanent, but the name written upon it by the mightiest of puny mortals is washed away by the next wave. Mankind alone has a past and a future, a philosophy and a history; but all we know of men is, that here and there one wrote his name at low water in the sand, conceiving that he had founded for himself an imperishable monument. What, then, were the names of the builders of the pyramids, which tell that the race of moles once burrowed there near the surface of the earth?

The Spirit which gives law to that sea, which commanded it to rise and to fall, alone lives for ever!

Between the dockyards and the town are a great number of cabins built of wood, a sort of village called Le Perrey. The small crazy huts, mostly inhabited by fishermen, ship-carpenters, brick-makers, as well as the many liquor and cider shops, lead one to infer that their inmates do not belong precisely to the *élite* of the human race; but also that, in the hours which their labour allows them for rest, they strive, in defiance of Fate, to forget their unfortunate situation. The immorality of the lower classes of the people is, in general, rather the consequence of their wretchedness and destitution, than of their rudeness and of the want of education and instruction. He alone saves, he alone leads a regular life, who, at the end of the week, the month, the year, hopes at least to see what he has been saving for. Misery and want hold a sort of revel every night; the morrow has no hope for them but that of getting a bellyful again at night, if, however, it has this. Hence it is, that the necessitous wretch, whenever Fate smiles more kindly upon him, flings himself into the arms of oblivious indulgence, and lives an hour in which he has no need to think of the wants of the morrow. How comes it that in Paris none but the labouring people of the very lowest class are to be seen every Sunday at the Barrières, giving themselves up like brutes to the indulgence of the animal appetites, while such as work at trades by which they can

earn rather more than their daily bread are scarcely ever to be found there? The former there hold their Sunday carouse, to prepare themselves for the execution that is repeated every week. I do not imagine that they think so, because they never think; but I believe that they feel so; and, if they should ever learn to speak, they will reason so. If any one could put an end to poverty and distress, he would give the death-blow to vice and crime. If men would use their eyes to see, the simple circumstance, that among one hundred criminals two-thirds have always been impelled by necessity to transgress, would suffice to induce them to strive not to destroy the evil itself, but to extirpate its cause, its root. They imagine that they can get rid of the nettles by cutting them down, and leave the roots in the ground to send up stronger shoots than ever. There is but one sound theory of penal law, namely, that which seeks the cause of crime, the motive, and destroys it. But this can only be done by humanity, kindness, and, above all, a little common sense—all contraband goods at the present day.

Poverty is a cruel misfortune. The very air which the bird breathes in its purity becomes pestilential for the poor. In large cities this is the order of the day. Here, in a village, the same circumstances struck me more strongly than in towns, for there we are accustomed to it. The brick-kilns in Le Perrey continually impregnate the air with sulphureous effluvia, which attack the

lungs, and excite cough, so that whoever is not obliged to dwell or to stay there takes care to get out of their vicinity as speedily as possible.

Beyond the brick-kilns is the quarter of the Gobelins. Here, perhaps, was once a manufactory of the tapestry invented by the celebrated Gobelin. But I should not like to set myself in opposition to that most veracious authority—popular tradition. This says that the *Gobelins* (goblins) are heathen gods or christian devils, who played their pranks here many centuries ago, to whom their votaries sacrificed from time to time, at midnight, a black cock, at the cross-road hard by, and then joined with them in all sorts of wild revels. I have nothing to say against black cocks; but they, as well as evil spirits, seem to have become very scarce So much is quite certain, that the devil used to stop here in his rounds about midnight, and refresh himself with a black cock, which was brought for him by way of heriot, or as some other token of his lordship paramount and the vassalage of his votaries. The devils are deposed; I had almost said, the devil has fetched the devils; and unless Messieurs the Protestants, who have chosen for themselves a resting-place very near this decried cross-road and made a cemetery there, lose in the narrow house somewhat of their prosaic way of thinking, and now and then get up a dance at midnight, like honest Christian Roman Catholics, the poetry of the once so merry cross-road ball will stand a fair chance of being consigned to oblivion.

Beyond this cross-road and the cemetery, you come to a spot commanding a view which, in the fine season, is surpassed by very few that I am acquainted with. Before us is the sea, bounded by the blue horizon and the road of Havre, in which a hundred vessels, large and small, are frequently lying at once. On the left are seen the town, the pier, and the dockyard, and farther off, in the background, the hills of Calvados, stretching like a dark blue island into the sea. On the right are the rocks of La Hève, and facing these rocks, the pleasant little village of St. Adresse.

Whenever I attempt to describe a landscape, I feel the truth of the old rule, which forbids us to botch up one art with another. And yet, I would fain communicate the feelings that have so often animated me on this spot. St. Adresse is situated in a small quiet valley, at the outlet of which the boundless sea expands before us. The little cottages are half covered by fruit-trees, and the church or chapel is partly embosomed in the valley, and tells only by the top of the spire that here, too, is a place where men feel constrained to acknowledge at times their own nothingness. The profoundest repose seems to pervade village and valley, as well as the contiguous rocks of La Hève, which shelter it from the north and east winds, which the sea has been assailing for thousands of years, and from which it now and then washes away a few feet; and lastly, beside this repose of the little valley and village, the ever new life of the sea, often lashed into fury

by the tempest. I have at times sought to discover the secret of beauty, and have smiled at the solution of the riddle by means of curved lines; but I have as often lost the clue when I fancied that it could not fail to lead me to the goal. This, however, I have often felt—that contrast is at least one of the laws of the beautiful. The boy along with the aged man, the wife on the arm of the husband, the tempest and the struggle against it, danger and the courage to defy it, repose, energy, and busy life, beside one another, excite us, awaken in us feelings, ideas, elevate us; and then we are astonished, and admire the beauty that lies in this diversity. And even in unity, this variety, these contrasts, may be concealed: rest itself may call forth the remembrance of movement, peace that of the conflict, as we perceive in the contemplation of the placid sea. A veteran whose features are furrowed with age may make us call to mind his former vigour, his courage, his noble disposition. Why do we admire as beautiful a ruin, from whose cleft wall shoots forth a young tree, around which clings the fresh ivy? The single figure of a female can express these contrasts, when we discern in her features the impress of woman, weakness, angelic purity; whose eye sparkles with the fire of first love, whose lips are crimsoned by the first virgin kiss, or the chaste remembrance of it. I mean not to say that contrast, change, are the key to the secret of beauty, but to a certainty they are one of its laws.

We meet with the most glaring contrasts in hilly

countries, and still more on hilly sea-shores. Hence it is, that we call so many prospects there beautiful. But rarely are they more conspicuous than at St. Adresse, where the village is a picture of soothing sabbath repose, the sea an image of ever agitated life, and yon rock, La Hève, that of the conflict of the two elements—idyl, epic, and drama, interwoven together. For hours have I stood here, or reclined on the grass, indulging pleasing reveries, or devising subjects for others.

The sea is making inroads upon the village, too. I remarked how much nearer the houses were to the narrow path which runs along the margin of the cliff than they were the last time I was here, above a year ago, because the former path had been undermined, and washed away in several places. History tells of a village situated several hundred years since about a league off, and which the sea has converted into an abode of fishes. This village, to which St. Adresse owes its origin, was called, in its time, St. Denis Chef des Caux. The sea has swallowed up the village, and time and enlightenment have thrust St. Denis from his high station. He could not even protect his own church. But how a St. Adresse, who is not to be found in the Roman Catholic calendar, came to be set up in his stead, is a very pretty story.—The sea was very rough one day, and was driving a ship with a violence that nothing but courage and skill can withstand, towards the coast of St. Denis, as the village was still called. The greater the danger the more

the crew became dispirited, and the captain alone retained his presence of mind. The crew and the pilot saw but one resource; they desisted from their exertions, and fell on their knees to implore the protection of St. Denis. The vessel left to herself only drove the more rapidly towards the rocks. The captain was furious, and stormed louder than the sea. "Ye asses!" he cried, "don't you see that while you are on your knees, the ship is only hurrying the more swiftly to destruction?" He threatened one, coaxed another, pulled up a third from his knees, and hurled him towards the helm. "If any thing can save us," said he, "it is only the assistance of St. Adresse (la sainte adresse), and without that we must be inevitably lost." The men began again to exert themselves; the vessel was carried past the most dangerous places, and at length weathered the storm. St. Denis was deposed, *Sainte Adresse* was made the patron of the village in his stead, and is said to have since wrought many other manifest miracles.

But even she has not yet been able to prevent the encroachments of the sea, which, from year to year, contracts the space upon which the village stands; and who knows whether it may not some day engulph the church of the new saint, as it did of yore that of St. Denis! Till then, however, the quiet, peaceful village will console, for a few hours, many a wanderer weary of life, by its sabbath stillness and solemnity.

Bernardin de Saint Pierre, author of "Paul and

Virginia," one day took it into his head to turn hermit here. He belonged not to the class of persons who are weary of life, for he was but nine years old; and boy-suicides were not then in fashion, as among the precocious youth of our present age, in which the children seem to assume the part of men, and the men that of children. He knew as yet no other trouble than that of having received a rather severe lecture from his schoolmaster. The threat of punishment one day produced such an effect, that the young sinner resolved to do penance, and to turn hermit, that he might escape, in the first place school, and in the next, all the persecutions and seductions of the world. Accordingly, turning his back on the school, he set out in quest of a spot sufficiently solitary for his purpose. His pilgrimage had lasted about an hour, when the young truant, having reached the wood behind St. Adresse, conceived that he was in a real wilderness, and resolved there to commence his life of seclusion from the world. The day was delightful; the birds sang their liveliest songs; the great heart of the little hermit understood their language, swelled with delight, and rejoiced at having burst the fetters of the world and of school, and gained perfect liberty. Blackberries were naturally the first meal of the recluse, and, having made his supper of the same fruit, he set about building himself a little hut of boughs. The hermitage was not quite finished, when he heard at a distance the voice of his faithful nurse and attendant, Marie Palbot, calling his

name. He could not imagine how she had found out his retreat, and the first impression made upon him by the voice of his kind Marie, who had always been so fond of him, was to penetrate further into the wood and hide himself from her. But the voice came nearer and nearer, and Bernardin soon heard that the calls were interrupted by weeping and sobbing. His heart was not proof against this; he hastened to her, threw himself into her arms, comforted her, and wiped the tears that trickled down her cheeks and his own. How could he have forsaken the world, if he had loved only his good Marie Palbot, and not a creature besides, and been loved by none but her! And he, the future author of "Paul and Virginia," loved all the world, every human being, every bird, every tree, every flower.

The anecdote alone would sufficiently demonstrate his vocation. He became—his heart and his imagination pointing the way—he became the most feeling writer of France; nay, I cannot help thinking that in the works of Bernardin de St. Pierre is to be found a confirmation of my notion that centuries have not wholly effaced in the French Normans their German origin. Not one other French writer has shown so profound a comprehension and feeling of nature as he, and as a hundred German writers have done. To him every tree, every plant, are friends, who surround him, whom he fosters and cherishes, and with whom he has made a contract. And the preceding anecdote itself is quite German: it betrays that feeling which drives

the German from his home, and thrills him when he hears the leaves above his head relating the secret stories of the loves of the fairies, and of the horrors of the erl-king and his daughters. Paul and Virginia is a long forgotten old Norman story translated into French.

A little wood, which I was obliged to pass through in order to ascend to the lighthouses, was so still, so quiet, that I could easily conceive how the rich fancy of the young St. Pierre might take this or a similar place for a wilderness; and I rested myself in it for a while, to give free scope to the feelings which this anecdote had excited in me, and to carry myself back in imagination to those peaceful days, when I too could play truant for a few hours, and in a garden or a coppice, far, far away from home, fancy myself a sort of Robinson Crusoe in a solitary island.

The way from this wood to the lighthouses on the Hève is monotonous enough. But there a boundless prospect opens upon you: the sea lies spread out at your feet. There are few points where sunset affords a more beautiful sight, and I wish I could describe how beautiful I have often seen it here.

The lighthouses are massive, square, prosaic towers, in the style of the last century. A keen cutting wind prevailed on the heights, and this, with the exception of the prospect, with which, however, the lighthouses have nothing to do, is all that I have to say of the latter, unless I add that in

one of them there is a collection of shells, where you may pay a handsome price for one, as you cannot think of giving the keeper's son the trouble to go up to the top with you for nothing.

Here too Francis I. purposed to make a display of his glory. From this spot he resolved to review his fleet, which was collected to convey the *grande armée* of the *grand roi* to England. To this end, a triumphal arch had been constructed here with boughs and flowers. But this time he had no better luck than usual: the balls from the English fleet spoiled the sport, and obliged him to sheer off. There is nothing so ridiculous as conceited mediocrity aping greatness. So the god of history seems to have thought in regard to Francis I., for, whenever this monarch prepares to show himself in all his glory, he trips up his heels, and laughs scornfully at him as he lies sprawling on the ground.

I have often made a circuit to avoid going over the same ground twice. A footpath leads down from the lighthouses, and I would advise all who come after me to take it in descending. It leads by a rapid declivity to the foot of the Hève, where a new spectacle presents itself. Beyond and around us lie scattered blocks, as though broken from the rock by some giant, for the purpose of building himself a house with them. The power of the sea is abundantly manifested here. Besides, these blocks riven from their parent rocks are frequently grouped in the most picturesque manner, and I recollect a sunset here, which was one of the most

exquisite pictures that I ever beheld in the workshop of the greatest of masters. I stood facing two masses of rock as high as a house, which bounded the view on the right and left; and beyond this pass opened a prospect over the sea studded with shipping; at the distant horizon the orb of day was descending to his ocean-bath, crimsoning the sea and gilding the clouds. The finest painting is but schoolboy's work in comparison with this scene.

The weather, which early in the morning had been so delightful and seemed to promise the beginning of spring, threatened to change. The sky again became gradually clothed in gray, its livery for the last six months, and I therefore quickened my pace as I returned towards the town. By the way, the nets set up in a circle in which the fish are caught at flood-tide and left behind at low water, reminded me of the idea of the abbé Diguemarre, who proposed to establish a menagerie of inhabitants of the deep at the foot of the Hève. He was a century too early with his plan.

My way led me again past the cemetery of the Protestants, but on a different side of it, and afterwards by that of the Catholics. This is situated in a plain; and the little chapels, the numerous crosses, the flowers, and the weeping willows which adorn the graves, give it a poetical aspect: but it is a pity that it lies so low that the dead deposited here are literally drowned, for they lie two or three feet deep in water. Concerning this cemetery is told one of those stories which, like the holy three kings,

have more than one head, and are to be met with in different places. It is no other than the celebrated Cologne tradition of a sexton cutting off the finger of a deceased lady, after she had been buried, for the sake of the gold ring that was upon it, and thus waking her from the sleep of death. At that time, of course, the water could not have covered the coffins, as it does at present. But miracles do not stick about such trifles. The Cologne version has some additional circumstances. The incredulous husband, when his wife knocks at the house-door, and he is told that she is come back, replies: "That is as impossible as that my horses should be in the garret gaping out at the windows." And when this impossibility was nevertheless found to be possible, he had his horses carved in wood and placed them at his windows, as a memorial of the wonder. Here at Havre the affair is rather more prosaic, and not half so awful, for the wooden horses, which stood for several hundred years at the windows as evidences of the fact, are no longer in existence.

One of the most interesting excursions from Havre is to Graville. Several roads lead thither. One of them runs along the canal from Havre to Harfleur; another is the *route neuve*, constructed a few years since, which connects Havre with Ingouville.

How rapidly Havre increases may be inferred

from the circumstance that the value of the ground on each side of this new road has trebled in the space of ten years, so that the person by whom it was purchased is now a very wealthy man. A great number of new houses, which have lately sprung up here, prove that the fortifications do not permit all whose business lies in the town to reside there.

From this route the Paris highroad runs off to Graville. The village which some scholars will have to be the celebrated and lost town Catæorium, which occurs in the Itinerary of the Antonines, is considered by others as the ancient Geraldi Villa. Let them fight it out. The matter is of the utmost importance.

The first Normans who landed in France destroyed the village. But, as its situation at the mouth of the Seine was advantageous for pirates, there was soon erected on its site a fortified castle, which covered the retreat of the Normans, who penetrated farther into the country. This castle belonged at a later period to the counts of Graville, who were the feudal lords of the whole surrounding country, and as such acted a not unimportant part in the history of Normandy. The castle afterwards passed into the hands of the clergy, who turned it into an abbey; till at length the revolution came, swept away castle and convent, and gave the land to the peasants to cultivate, and the remaining monastic buildings to the mayor for the benefit of the commune.

Such is the brief history of the place; it is much

the same as that of France and Europe; for as in the insect may be traced the vital energy of animals in general, so in every stone whose history has been preserved may be found that of the whole world. But it was not precisely these lessons in natural history and philosophy that I meant to propound. I have something else to do; to feast myself upon an enchanting prospect, upon the beauties of nature, to which all philosophy is cold, bald, and naked.

Before us opens the bed of the Seine, many miles in width. Harfleur and the hills behind it as far as Quillebeuf bound the prospect. At our feet lies the most luxuriant vegetation in the beautiful valley which the land has won from the Seine and the sea; on the left, Havre, at the extremity of this valley, and beyond Havre the sea. Vessels from all parts of the world are hastening to the town; the masts of those in the basins overtop the churches, which seem to bow before them, by way of doing homage to the supremacy of commerce. In the valley itself, the sturdy husbandman is at work, ploughing his fields; in the hills behind us resounds the woodman's axe, and the dark, gray sails of the fishing-vessels stud the Seine and the sea. All that there is exciting, all that there is animating for human society, is comprised within the small compass of a few miles; and the imagination has here scope sufficient to consider life on every side.

History has preserved certain circumstances,

which, if a single glance at the spot did not afford room to infer the fact, and an examination of the ground did not place it beyond doubt—prove that the walls of the castle of Graville, which would now be seated on the middle of the hill, if it had not been superseded by a terrace commanding a most magnificent prospect, were washed a thousand years ago by the waves of the sea and the Seine. In the walls of the ancient castle were to be seen, scarcely a century since, the great iron rings to which ships were moored. History says moreover that the Normans laid up their vessels for the winter in the ditches, or the harbour, of Graville, and that, at the time of Lothair, son of Louis the Gentle, the ships of the Normans assembled there when he summoned them to his assistance against Louis of Bavaria and Charles the Bald. In 1525, the sea strove to wrest from the land what it had gradually acquired; it rushed during a violent storm to the walls of the castle, and upset twenty-eight fishing vessels in these ditches, by way of protesting against their right of possession. But this protest was of little avail. When the storm was over, the land retained its usurped right, and between Graville and the Seine now lies a fertile plain some leagues in breadth, and between Graville and the sea the town of Havre and the village of Ingouville. Thus what the sea rends from the cliff of La Hève, the land here regains doubly and trebly. Leaving the learned to quarrel about the cause of this phenomenon, I content myself with the idea that, at my feet, where of yore the

fisherman cast out his net, the husbandman now reaps abundant harvests.

The church of Graville is very ancient, and may have some interest for the architect. It is as like a hundred more, that I have seen in different places, if not as one egg is to another, at least as one cock is to another. I recollect to have seen and heard in it but one thing worth mentioning, and from the like to which may Heaven preserve every musical ear! One Sunday, the fine weather having invited me abroad, I walked to the terrace of Graville to enjoy the prospect., I arrived there rather fatigued with my little excursion; and, after I had performed on the terrace my Sunday devotions to that God who preaches so impressively in flowers, trees, hills, rivers, and seas, I suffered myself to be enticed to the church, that I might rest upon one of the chairs which are to be hired there. It was some particular festival. The church was crowded. The evening service soon commenced, and with it an infernal torment for the ears, which soon made me forget my weariness and drove me out again into the open air. Very few churches in France have an organ; its place is supplied in general by what are called *serpents*, a sort of roaring lions, seeking what poor soul they may devour. On account of the festival, the aid of a second serpent from some neighbouring place had been obtained. The moment the priest stepped up to the altar, both commenced their horrid din. As if the natural dog-howl and bull-roar of these accursed instruments were not enough, one of them

was always half a note higher or lower than the other. And this racket was accompanied with the screeching of two or three hundred women, and the grunting of half-a-dozen thorough-basses. I have heard the wind howling in the rigging of vessels; I once heard the excited populace in Paris vent their fury in shouts and yells; but here the good people prayed to Heaven, here they sang a hymn of praise to the Almighty, to which all the horrible and frightful noises I had ever before heard were a real treat for the ear. The trial was too severe; after the first minutes, I hurried out of the church, to escape this purgatory.

The general relish for art prevailing among the Greeks is attributed to the numerous works of art which they had opportunities of contemplating at every step. Whoever has been but once in a French village church need not ask the reason why the French have the least taste of any people in the world for singing or music. If with such music they were to acquire a musical ear, then verily I should not despair of morality, if the devil himself were to turn schoolmaster and give lessons in it.

But one thing was clear to me. The people believe that formerly a wonder-working image in this church possessed the power of restoring the sense of hearing to deaf seamen, who had lost that faculty in storms at sea or by the thunder of the cannon; and I have not the least doubt of the miracle, if there is a word of truth in Hahnemann's theory. But Heaven defend those who can hear from this antidote to deafness!

Behind the church, in the courtyard of the *mairie*, are to be seen the cellars of the monks, hewn out of the rock, which are said to have been dungeons at an earlier period under the counts of Graville. This reform I most cordially approve. Commend me to the pious monks, their cellar, and their wine. They led a jovial life, did those good friars. In the last century, there were but four or five of them in the convent, which had a net revenue of 40,000 francs. Brother Pierre Legardin was one of the oldest, and yet one of the heartiest and jolliest. A priest in the neighbourhood wrote to him, inquiring by what means he contrived to be so hale and vigorous at his advanced age. His reply was as follows:—"My dear brother, I am to-day one hundred and four years old, and am writing to you by the light of my lamp. I have lived virtuously, and recommend to you to follow the diet which I adopted at your age. [The inquirer was eighty years old.] Add every day to your usual allowance a bottle of good wine, and God will preserve you who are so useful to your flock. That is, my dear Jules, the sincere wish of your brother, Pierre Legardin."

Beyond the churchyard, a steep, narrow road, between green hedges, leads up the hill till you come to a second road, which runs over a sort of elevated plain to the *Côte* of Ingouville. This road is, for a while, very beautiful. Green hedges and fruit-trees, on either side, meet over-head, and form a shady alley. From time to time, openings

in these hedges afford views of the lovely valley of the Seine or the sea. Here you see the Byzantine Gothic church of Graville, with a Gothic cross before it, the churchyard around it in the foreground, and behind it the valley, the Seine, and the hills; there a straw-thatched cottage, and again in the back-ground, the valley, the Seine, the hills, Havre, and the sea. Thus at every step you have a different prospect, ever beautiful, ever new, and ever varying, with the repose of the chiaro-scuro, in which the shady road envelops you. At length this alley opens, and then you see before you, on the right, the somewhat monotonous elevated plain, and on the left a long wall which protects the gardens and summer-houses, and intercepts all prospect of the valley, till you come to a spot where an iron gate opens a view into an alley which runs down the hill, and beyond which you catch a glimpse of the Seine and the valley.

At length you come to the highest houses of Ingouville. The wealthier merchants of the wealthy commercial town have here built a number of palaces, where they enjoy themselves in summer after the toils of the day. Many English live in those which the owners are willing to let, that they may thus make money even of their villas. Almost the whole upper part of Ingouville consists of such summer residences; and it would be difficult to find a more delightful situation. As the ascent is pretty steep, every window commands views over vale and hill, river and sea, town and village. But, at the top of the hill, at the end of the street, which runs

past these villas, you have once more an unobstructed view of the sea, the town, the Seine and its hilly banks, which, beautiful as all may be that you have seen before, appears again new, again sublime. Here, beneath shady trees, whose boughs hang down to your head, are placed seats to rest yourself; many an evening have I accepted their invitation, and while my eye roved over the expansive sea, imagination has accompanied the vessels leaving the port to other regions of the globe. A spring morning, or a summer evening here, is a treat on which you may feast all your life, if you have fancy enough to call up again the exquisite scene that this spot presented to you.

It is customary in Havre, for every one who can anyhow, to go about five in the morning, from the first to the last day of May, to the Côte d'Ingouville, to drink new milk before breakfast. May milk is reputed to be extremely wholesome. I, for my part, cannot sufficiently extol the sagacious doctor who first prescribed it; but his Havre colleagues have great reason to grumble, for a whole apothecary's shop is scarcely capable of counteracting the beneficial effects produced by such a morning walk, the delightful prospect, and the new milk. While I most punctually followed this prescription, I regretted nothing so sincerely as that every day was not Sunday; for then all was here life and bustle, and the people were tripping, and skipping, and jumping about with such glee as might well drive all the medical faculty of Paris and Montpellier to despair, were they but to witness it.

On my return, I passed through Ingouville, a kind of suburb to Havre, from which it is separated only by the fortifications, and which, sooner or later, must, to a certainty, be united with the town. Ingouville is said to have been formerly a fishing village; and now Havre and its immediate environs lie between it and the sea. At present the place is chiefly composed of new houses, and there is nothing about it to indicate that this was once the site of the wretched huts of fishermen. The history of Ingouville is wholly unimportant: there is nothing worthy of record except the hospital. This institution was formerly under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Rouen, who set himself in opposition to the military authorities of Havre. The prelate cared not if the sick soldiers died without attendance, and, with most Christian charity, forbade them to be admitted into the hospital. The military commandant, taking a different view of the matter, early one morning ordered his grenadiers to invest the hospital. It surrendered on capitulation; the grenadiers took possession of the rooms, carried their ailing comrades into them, and, with the bayonet, which was in fashion already in those days, forced the Fathers of Mercy to wait upon the sick. History is an incessant contradiction, a series of discords, the solution of which he alone finds, who knows how to combine them into a whole. He sees how the musket and the bayonet must support the interests of humanity, when those who are called to its service neglect their duty. Folly is the best promoter of truth.

CHAPTER XI.

Harfleur — Historical Facts — Causes of the Decline of the Town — Orcher — The Chateau and Park — The latter generously thrown open to the public by the owner — Gambols there — Montivilliers—Magnificent Views from the surrounding Hills— Rouelles; Great number of infants nursed there — Gournay — Prevalence of beggary at Montivilliers, owing to the Convent formerly existing there — Its Corn-market — Keenness of Norman peasants.

I HAD promised to go on St. Anne's day to Orcher, where Antoine, with his friends and relatives, was to celebrate the cabinetmakers' festival. Being detained in the forenoon by business, I could not join him till the afternoon. A sort of omnibus carried me to Harfleur, and I got a glimpse, as I passed through it, of that once famous and flourishing commercial town. There is, indeed, scarcely any thing to be seen there, excepting the church and a sugar-baker's; and as the former, though a bold and handsome edifice, resembles very many churches in Normandy, and the latter is as like all other establishments of the kind as one egg is to another, I could gratify my curiosity without apprehension of missing our festival. The only re-

markable thing that I know about the church is this couplet of Casimir Delavigne's:

> Le clocher de Harfleur, debout pour vous apprendre
> Que l'Anglais l'a bati mais n'a pu le defendre.

Why the English could not defend it, we are not told by the "History of Harfleur." The Normans, who had once conquered the English, would not be conquered and still less ruled by them, even after they had become half Normans themselves. A people need but to will, and the thing is done. Henry V., of England, had taken Harfleur, and reduced great part of Normandy. The resistance made by Harfleur, which did not surrender while a mouthful was left in the town, exasperated the king to such a degree that he took sixteen hundred families and carried them to Calais, where they were to be embarked, after they had delivered up all their property to the conqueror, as the price of their liberty. He then ordered the charters of the town to be publicly burned in the market-place, and issued a law disqualifying every inhabitant of Harfleur to possess in fee, or to inherit, any house in the town, and conferring that right on persons born in England alone. No better means, indeed, could have been devised for perpetuating hatred against England in Harfleur and Normandy. For twenty years the people of Harfleur endured this tyranny. They hoped for succour from the king of France, but hoped in vain: at length they resolved to right themselves. One hundred and four

townsmen of Harfleur conspired with the inhabitants of the environs, the peasants of the Pays de Caux, as a portion of the department of the Lower Seine was formerly denominated. One morning, these confederates fell upon the guard at the gates, which they threw open, and drove out those of the garrison who had the good luck to escape the first outbreak of their fury. Five years afterwards, in 1436, the English once more took the town with a strong army; but they retained it for only a short time, and were then obliged to quit the country for ever.

In honour of those one hundred and four brave fellows, every morning at sunrise the same number of tolls were given on the bell of Harfleur, down to the time of the Revolution; and I cannot conceive, for my part, what grounds of objection could have induced the Revolution to abolish this venerable custom.

At a still earlier period, in 1346, Harfleur was taken by the English, just at the moment when the town was equipping a fleet to attack them. The seamen of Harfleur subsequently took a signal revenge, destroying the English fleet in 1382, and again in 1410. Lastly, they lent their ships to the earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII., when he sailed from this port with two thousand men for England, to prosecute his claim to the crown. The people of Harfleur were, upon the whole, excellent seamen, as is proved, not only by their victories, but by their voyages and discoveries. In 1503,

Gonneville, a mariner of this town, discovered some of the Australian islands.

From all these facts the former importance of the place may be inferred. It was once the principal port of France, and was frequented by Spaniards, Portuguese, English, and Dutch, who brought thither their commodities. The frequent wars themselves could not destroy its prosperity. A still more powerful foe arose against it, and bade the sea retire, so that its port was no longer accessible. For a time the vessels landed their cargoes for Harfleur at the port of Heure, between it and Havre; but when the latter town was built, Harfleur gradually declined to the state in which it still continues to vegetate. The bustling town was deserted; the warehouses disappeared, and the inhabitants removed to other places. The same town, from which the English once carried off sixteen hundred families, whose harbour was once called *le souverain port de Normandie*, has now scarcely sixteen hundred inhabitants; and instead of wealthy merchants is now to be seen, not exactly poverty, for this is very rare throughout all Normandy, excepting in the former possessions of the Church, but a modest, industrious middle-class, which would be able to give its sovereign, or any one else whom it wished to honour, as splendid a feast as did the merchants of Harfleur three centuries ago to king Francis I.*

* In a small work entitled "Antiquités de la Ville de Harfleur," published at Havre in 1799, I have found the bill of fare of

The road from Harfleur to Orcher gradually ascends, and every where affords a fine view of the valley of the Seine and Harfleur. At length you reach the top of the hill, and then find yourself in a village, consisting of public-houses, at the entrance of the park which leads to the château.

The château itself is a modern structure, though its gray colour gives it a look of antiquity. It belongs to Madame de Mortemart, daughter of the marquis de Nagu. It is not remarkable either for its architecture or its history; but, though the antiquary and the historian may pass it coldly by, I advise every lover of Nature, every one who would fain be happy himself, and to see happy beings around him, if he should come into the environs of Havre, not to miss making a pilgrimage hither the first fine Sunday. To the right of the château is

that entertainment, and think that it may prove interesting on more than one account. It is as follows:—

Grand Repas à l'Hotel de Ville à l'arrivée de François I.

	frs.	s.
Pour 16 douzaines de pain, à 2 sous le douz.	1	12
Pour Perdrix, Canards, Videcoqs, Plouviers, Lapins, Chapons, et autre sauvagins	7	14
Deux moutons, à 16 sous pièce	1	12
4 Gigots de mouton, à 2 sous 6 den. pièce	0	10
6 Tartes, à 3 sous	0	18
8 Livres de lard à larder, à 2 sous	0	16
1 Douzain de verres à pied	0	9
47 Gallons de vin, à 2 sous 6 deniers le pôt	14	5
1 Ponchon de vin claret d'Orleans	8	0
Depens au Fourrier	8	0
Aux laquais du Seigneur Roi	6	0
Total	49	16

a terrace nearly half a mile in length, carpeted with the finest greensward, shaded by umbrageous chestnut-trees, which commands a view of the Seine, the further bank of the river, the sea, and towards Harfleur and Honfleur, so beautiful, so animated, and so diversified, that it is scarcely to be matched in the finest countries in Europe. And this terrace, this park, swarm on a Sunday with people from far and near, sporting, amusing, and enjoying themselves. I have known many persons, who were called the benefactors of their fellow-citizens; but there are few who have done more good than the noble marquise de Nagu, who has thrown open this beautiful and extensive park to the labourers, the peasants, the sailors, the fishermen, of the environs, and allows them here on the Sunday to forget, for a few hours, the hardships and the cares of life. What is a donation in comparison with this? Had she even given away the whole estate for charitable purposes, and turned the château into an hospital, she would not have conferred half so much happiness as in affording the poor the means of here at times forgetting their poverty. Others give to the indigent a spot two feet wide to die in; she gives them her park to live in, to frolic in, to revel in. It does one good to see how sensible the humble visiters are of this bounty, how every tree, every shrub is respected, and how the rude sailors themselves are scarcely ever mischievous enough to do the least injury.

On the terrace I found my friends, men, women,

and children, playing at touch-tree. They scarcely allowed me time for salutation, obliged me, by way of punishment for coming so late, to act the part of catcher. For this day we were lords and masters of the park, and we allowed the others either to look on unmolested, or to play at their own games. Now a merry band of young people tripped past us dancing; presently loud calls from the thickets were answered by the joyous laugh of children, whom a grave shopkeeper and his spouse were taking out for a walk. We too turned children again, and I fancied more than once that I heard the voice of our stern schoolmaster, who so often surprised us young urchins at this game in the churchyard, and drove us with his cane out of our paradise. Formerly, I could play at this game from morning till night, and the day was not long enough; now, half an hour put my lungs to a severe trial, and I was glad when the seniors of the party—for even these, a grandpapa of seventy-one, and his better half, who had been his partner in life upwards of forty years, forgot their gray hair, and their grandchildren, and played as though they had been not an hour older than the latter—desired a pause.

We threw ourselves in a circle upon the grass, and chatted and laughed away an hour till dinner was ready. In the house where we dined the greatest bustle prevailed. From the windows of the room which our friends had engaged, we could overlook the whole yard, which swarmed with company.

On one side of it was put up a sort of shed, where table stood beside table, with a merry party at each: here, a family, father, grandfather, mother, children, and grandchildren; there, sailors, with their wives and mistresses; yonder another table surrounded by soldiers, and another by labouring men. There was scarcely a spot in the whole spacious yard that was not covered by tables, chairs, and benches: and still there seemed not be room enough for all who thronged to it.

The dinner passed off as dinners generally do. We ate, we drank; there was little talk at first; by and by a witty sally excited a hearty laugh; and at last, at the desert, we were entertained with humorous songs, some of them by Beranger, who is more popular in Normandy than in any other part of France. On leaving the table we returned to the park, and after a short walk a new game was got up—prison-bars. This, like the other, had its mournful side, for it convinced me that since my boyish days I had not made any great advances in agility. Evening stole upon us while thus engaged, and the setting sun summoned us to the terraces to admire the reflections which it threw upon the Seine. A thin vapour rested upon the river and the opposite bank, and was transformed into an airy veil of gold, which, so far from concealing its beauty, only served, as in woman, to heighten its charms.

At length we proceeded in couples, for the game had brought the stragglers together, towards our

quarters. Here and there in the park still prevailed symptoms of the former hilarity; but as the moon rose these gradually died away. The company in the yard of our public-house was greatly diminished, and a few laggards only were left. These, however, are in general the most unruly guests, and submit to no discipline, no control. An old lame fiddler stood upon a hogshead in a corner of the yard, with an instrument from which he could produce only horribly false tones, and played quadrilles sometimes diversified by a waltz. The sailors and the farming-men from the neighbourhood danced with their girls. Part of our company got up a quadrille in another corner of the yard; till at length the old folks sounded a retreat, and we returned in an omnibus, amidst jokes, fun, and laughter, to Havre, where we arrived about midnight.

Monasterium villare is the Latin name of Montivilliers, situated two leagues from Havre on the Lezarde. Here was till the revolution a nunnery, indeed a royal abbey. After this I need not say that the environs are enchanting. The Lezarde meanders through a luxuriant valley, between gently rising hills, on which are scattered villas and substantial farm-houses, looking down from among the thickets and alleys around them into the vale beneath. On whatever side you ascend these hills from Montivilliers, the sweetest prospect presents

itself. The town, with its gothic-byzantine church, and its walls and towers which have gone to ruin, is mostly the centre of the ever picturesque view, to which the valley, the Lezarde, the meadows and mills, and lastly the hills, with their villas and farm-houses, form a most animated background. The prospect is grander in particular spots, where the eye can take in a wider range, and embrace the Seine and the further bank. At the Ferme aux Muriers, about a mile from Montivilliers, there is a point where, behind an alley of tall beeches, you enjoy a double view. On the right, beside this alley, opens a wide valley, the ground rising on either hand in the form of terraces, enlivened by the little river, intersected in every direction by rows of trees of all kinds, diversified by luxuriant meadows and corn-fields, and bounded by Harfleur and its tall church-steeple. But beyond this extensive foreground, the Seine forms a stripe of gold or silver, according as it is illumined by the sun; and, beyond this middle distance, animated by the steam-boats pursuing their rapid course up and down, you see the slate roofs of Honfleur glistening in the sun, and behind them the hills bordering the Seine close the prospect. But these varied objects occupy only one half of the picture. Take but two steps, and on the other side, to the left of the beech alley, beneath which we have been standing, appears a new and totally different scene. Here it is not the grandeur of a distant view that astonishes the eye; a most delicious picture of still life presents itself,

Montivilliers, embosomed among hills, and part of the charming valley of the Lezarde, which winds in fanciful meanders through the meadows, call forth only ideas of quiet and repose; while, on the other side of the alley, we felt a longing to explore the wide space before us, to mingle in the bustle of life. Over-head, meanwhile, tower the proud beeches, which form the frame to both pictures, a temple between whose tall pillars we peep forth, rejoicing in the festival that Nature here holds every day. Minstrels perched on their branches send up strains of joy to heaven, as though they were called to praise God in their simplicity, while our knowledge is struck dumb in astonishment at the beauty of nature. My heart rejoiced with them, but I could no more translate its language than that of the birds, for it belonged just as little as the latter to this life of wants. Nothing but want was the instructor of man when he created language.

Montivilliers is the most agreeable summer abode that can be desired. The town itself is quite rural. Through the principal street runs a streamlet of the most limpid spring water. The environs furnish daily fresh and delightful excursions. The ladies of my friend W——'s family resided here in summer; and almost every Saturday we went to Montivilliers and staid there till Monday morning. Our road frequently led us through Rouèlles, a small quiet village, in a narrow valley. A principal source of profit to this village consists in nursing the infants belonging to the people of the town. It is not

uncommon for a woman to have, besides her own infant, two or even three nurse-children. Accident once led me into a cottage, where I found three such nurses together, who were suckling no fewer than seven children. It is always a touching sight to see a mother nourishing her babe at that fountain which Nature has provided; but to see that there are people who, as here, make a trade of selling this nutriment, and that there are others who buy it, excited in me such disgust that I could scarcely wait till the person with whom I came had finished his business. This traffic is called an advance in civilisation—it is a gangrene.

From Montivilliers we occasionally made excursions to Gournay, the most peaceful retired valley I ever beheld. On the hill behind Gournay is situated a sort of castle called le Manoir St. Martin, which looks down upon a small valley inclosed on all sides, cut off, as it were, from the rest of the world, which lies before us like an enchanted island, with its streamlet, its farm-houses, its mill, meadows, corn-fields, and coppices. And only two leagues from this tranquil spot, from this undisturbed holiday of nature, the sea with its raging storms and the great commercial town with its greedy passions. It is as though Nature had foreseen that men would labour their whole life in that city to satisfy the cravings of selfishness, and had out of compassion placed these quiet valleys in their way, to receive them at the close of their days, and to prepare them for the death of egotism.

Another circumstance which produces a strong contrast between Havre and Montivilliers and the neighbouring villages is that, in spite of the numerous streams, scarcely any branch of industry is carried on in the latter. Agriculture is in a flourishing state, and most of the farmers are wealthy; but the rest of the inhabitants are poor, nay, many of them beggars. At Montivilliers, whole families live by begging; and from one year's end to another they travel from village to village in quest of their daily bread. I have often found that, as one may expect to meet with fine scenery in the vicinity of a convent, so one finds there more beggars than in other places. Montivilliers was once as flourishing a manufacturing town as Bolbec, or Elbeuf, or Louviers is now. But the more prosperous, the more wealthy, the abbey became, the more the industry of the people decreased; and long before the revolution not a trace was to be found of the former activity of the inhabitants of Montivilliers. The mass lived by the charity of the convent.

After the revolution, attempts were made to remedy this state of things, but all proved fruitless. It is a long time before you can break the people of old customs and usages. There is but one remedy for curing the hereditary sloth of countries which have been under the government of the crozier; that remedy is instruction. And scarcely any where has this remedy been seriously applied, though it has been talked about a great deal for the sake of parade. I am not one of those who consider in-

struction as synonymous with learning to spell and read; for there may be people among whom every child learns to read, and yet continues as ignorant of every thing beyond the circle of daily wants, as though he were the son of a clown of those days when there was no difference between clown and slave. But reading and writing are at least a beginning of improvement, of instruction; they are the door which is opened for them, and at which they will enter, if a pit is not sunk before it, which it would be more difficult for them to get over than to break open the door. At Montivilliers no attempt whatever has been made to open this door for the people. It is the chief place of the canton, and till recently had not a single public school; it now has one opened by the Frères ignorantins, who assuredly will not fail to dig a pit deep and steep enough before it. In France in general, public instruction is in a wretched plight, and, if any one will take the trouble to scrutinize this matter to the bottom, he will find that M. Guizot thoroughly understands the doctrines of absolutism. But private instruction in France is free, and to this the country is indebted for its expansion, if not in breadth at least in height, though it is the former which is in the end of the greater importance and the more permanent benefit.

Montivilliers has a weekly corn-market, from which Havre and part of its environs are supplied, and where purchases are frequently made even for exportation. On these market-days the Norman

peasant may be observed in all his peculiarities of character. A very small number of Jews attend the market, for they have probably learned that they have not always the best of the bargain. It is most difficult to overreach a Norman peasant, for he is always upon his guard, and trick against trick is his motto.

I recollect that one day we were bargaining with a peasant in the vicinity of Montivilliers for a bee-hive, with all the honey and wax that it contained. As we knew not the price of the wax, our ladies wished to have as little wax as possible, and the peasant assured us that the hive contained at most about fifty pounds of honey and one of wax. This seemed to us very unlikely, and, to come at the truth, one of the ladies, who had listened to the conversation at a little distance, stepped up and said that she wanted about five pounds of wax, and she should be glad if the hive contained so much. The peasant now began, with the most innocent look in the world, to say that it was impossible to tell exactly how much wax a hive contains; sometimes there may be more than a pound, perhaps two, three, four, he could not say precisely. Wax was then dear, he added, dearer than honey; and he supposed that the hive might contain two or three pounds, but he could not tell. Thus he continued to waver, as he was uncertain what we wanted. More wax was displeasing to the lady on the right, more honey to the lady on the left. He fairly perspired with anxiety, till we agreed to

take the hive as it was, and he wiped his forehead. Similar scenes frequently occur at the market of Montivilliers. Till the peasant knows with whom he has to do and what the buyer wants, he is reserved and listens without saying a word about his commodity. But, as soon as he has seen or fancies that he has seen the buyer's cards, he is his man, and is sure to have what he wants. The latter, however, is as cautious as himself, and then the point is which shall first make the other speak out. *Oui* and *non* are here almost unknown words, as the proverb says.

Whoever wishes to study the Norman peasants, and has not time to make a long stay in the country, ought by all means to go on a Wednesday to the market of Montivilliers. But whoever is fond of the beauties of nature, whoever wishes to witness the frolics of the beasts of burden of the human world when they get a holiday, let him go thither on a Sunday. Each of them will find it worth the while.

CHAPTER XII.

Passage from Havre to Honfleur — Grand Views — Legends connected with the Seine and its Banks — The Bonhomme de Tatouville—The Death-Wedding—Honfleur—Bustle there on the arrival and departure of the Steamer — Historical recollections concerning the Town — Present character of the place and its Inhabitants—Traits illustrative of the courage of the Women in recent and ancient Times — Character of the Fishermen — La Côte de Grace — Chapel of Notre Dame — Splendid Views from it—Tradition respecting an ancient Hermitage at the foot of the Hill—Votive Offerings in the Chapel — Mont Joli — St. Clair—Statute Fair.

An excursion from Havre to Honfleur, and even a short stay in the latter town, will amply repay the inquisitive traveller. The natural scenery, the way of life of the people in and about Honfleur, their customs, their traditions, and likewise their history, are sufficiently interesting. One sailing vessel, Le Passager, still plies between Havre and Honfleur; but, since the steamers make the trip regularly every day, she rarely has more than a few passengers, unless bad weather detains the steamers at Havre, and business peremptorily calls travellers to the other bank of the Seine.

Nearly the whole passage from one bank to the other presents the most beautiful and the most

varied prospects. At first it is the shores about Havre that rivet our attention: and, if the proximity of the town impairs their general effect, every moment that we recede from them, they blend more and more into a whole; till at length Havre, the Côte d'Ingouville, rising amphitheatrically, adorned with a hundred gardens and villas, the steep cliffs of La Hève, and between them the quiet vale of St. Adresse, lastly, the sea and the Seine, concur to form one grand, harmonious, and beautiful picture.

More in the middle of the river, which here becomes a sea, it looks like a vast bay, as, at the termination of the view upwards, the hills on both banks seem to meet; while on the other side the boundless ocean opens upon you. At length the hills on the left bank of the Seine appear more distinct, and part into the most beautiful and richly-clad eminences, at the foot of which steep jagged rocks form a barrier against the depredations of the sea. On a spring day, when the thousands and tens of thousands of apple and other fruit-trees are wreathed with blossoms, the scene is more beautiful than you often meet with.

But what gives a still greater charm to this trip is the legends and traditions connected with the shores on the right and left, and frequently with the very spots over which the vessel is gliding, and which you may find either in tours in the environs, or have at times opportunities of hearing from the lips of a communicative peasant or seaman.

It is precisely these traditions, this habit of

clothing a simple fact in a romantic dress, and handing it down to posterity in tales, ballads, and proverbs, this method of animating Nature, the hard rock, the blossoming tree, of attaching recollections to it, and ennobling it by the natural poetry of a simple mind, that still bear witness to the German blood which flows in the veins of the Normans.

Do you see yon tree overtopping all the others on the hill above Honfleur? One of its branches is so bent that it seems to turn back almost to the stem, while another, extended, points to the distance, and its foliage has some resemblance to a large head, with a sailor's broad-brimmed hat upon it. This is the Bonhomme de Tatouville.

About a century since, the Seine changed its bed, and for several years the current kept close to the left bank, instead of running as it now does again along the right. This circumstance threw all the pilots and steersmen into no little perplexity, for they were obliged to study the river and its bed afresh, lest they should strike upon its many sand-banks, and precisely there where hitherto they had sailed in the greatest security. An old pilot of Tatouville, who had often risked his own life when there was a chance of saving the lives of others, resolved, when no longer able to direct the helm, not to relinquish his vocation to prevent disaster, and to succour those who are in danger. And so he went every morning before dawn of day to the spot perceptible from a great distance on which that tree stands, and there he stayed till late at night Watch-

ful and unwearied, he called out to every skipper that passed, telling him how he ought to steer, and what dangerous spots he ought to avoid, and was thus a benefactor to thousands, till death at length summoned him from the humane duty which he had imposed upon himself.

For a service so entirely disinterested, our times would, probably, have bestowed a bit of red riband and a cross, and, perhaps, a paragraph in a newspaper, commendatory of the giver and the receiver; it may be too not so much as that, unless chance had conveyed the name of the man to the drawing-room of some minister. The grateful Normans chose a memorial of the bonhomme de Tatouville, as the sailors call the old pilot, and a living one, which every year bears green leaves, and bright blossoms, and fair fruit. And then the people without ceremony made a saint of the good man of Tatouville, and conferred on him the gift of performing miracles, because in his life-time he had rendered kind offices to his fellow-creatures. They relate concerning this tree, that, when the bonhomme de Tatouville felt that the day was approaching on which Death would call him from his post, he prayed to God to send him a successor, upon which the staff that supported the hoary seaman struck root in the ground, grew up, assumed the shape of the bonhomme, and has from that time pointed the way to vessels in his stead. The tree was called after him le bonhomme de Tatouville, and it is venerated by the people like the shrine of a saint, and the com-

munes of the whole country round contribute their quota for its protection and preservation, because, as we have observed, it is still the blooming and fruit-bearing guide and director of the navigator.

Opposite to Honfleur, not far from Havre, there was before the Revolution a chapel called Notre Dame des Neiges. Of this chapel, too, a miraculous story is related. In former times Honfleur was once besieged by the English. Under cover of night, some bold fishermen left the town in their boat to carry the tidings to the commander of the French army at Rouen. No sooner were they out of the harbour than such a heavy fall of snow came on, that they could not keep the right track, and at last found themselves, to their extreme mortification and terror, at Havre, where they were in imminent danger of falling into the hands of their enemies, and being hanged as spies. A prayer to Notre Dame caused the snow to cease, and ever afterwards this chapel was called Notre Dame des Neiges. Time has not spared the chapel, as it has the good man. The Revolution laid its iron hand upon it, and has left not a vestige of its existence.

The very bed of the river over which the vessel is rapidly borne has its histories. One of these was related to me by our helmsman.

"When I was a boy"—he might be about forty — "I once saw such a wedding as is very seldom held. A journeyman watchmaker, an excellent fellow, married his master's daughter, and they were such a pair that it did people's hearts good to look

at them. The old watchmaker was rich, and gave a handsome treat to the wedding party. Next day, the nearest friends of the bride and bridegroom helped to clear away the remains of the feast, and after dinner they went together in a boat to a sand-bank full half a league long, which is left dry every day at ebb-tide. You will see it by and by higher up the Seine.

"The merry party drew the boat upon the sand, and all of them were soon dancing cheerily around the fiddler they had brought with them. The water began to rise, but they were too busy with their sport to observe that the circle upon which they were dancing was getting smaller and smaller. When the fiddler gave up playing, and they looked about for the boat, it was far from the sand-bank, and the current was drifting it away at a great rate. This put an end to their sport, and a cruel end it was. Not one of them could swim to overtake the boat; besides, it might by this time be too far off. We afterwards saw it a league from the sand-bank. This grew smaller from minute to minute. The sounds of mirth were turned into shrieks of despair and cries for help; but these cries were drowned by the dashing of the waves, and it was not till the sand-bank was almost entirely covered by the water that the distress of the party upon it was perceived from the shore. Twenty or thirty boats put off immediately. I leaped into my father's, and we all rowed as if for our lives. But the water kept rising, and at last the whole party, thirteen men and

women, had only just ground enough to stand on. And then we saw them fall upon their knees, and lift their hands towards heaven; and we pulled away harder than ever. But the water got higher and rougher, as if angry that it was kept so long from seizing its prey. We saw it enclosing them by degrees, and heard at times through the roaring of the waves a cry for help that cut us to the heart. Hard as we worked, we made way but slowly, for the wind too was against us; and we were yet a good bit from them, and we were the foremost, too, when a wave came rolling and broke over them, and carried them away. All we saw afterwards was the clothes of the women two or three times on the surface of the water, and then these also disappeared. Their last shriek of agony rang from boat to boat, and it was some little time before we were calm enough to say a *Paternoster* for their souls. Till my dying day I shall not forget it.

"There were *thirteen* of them, and they were married on a *Friday*. The old watchmaker was a freethinker, and would have it so, or we should certainly have saved them," added the steersman, and thought that he had said something as profound as a German professor, who assures his auditors that he has found the key to the mystery of the creation of the universe. I took little notice at the moment of this conclusion, and scarcely remarked that the Norman is just as superstitious as the peasantry of northern Europe; for he further said: "Next day we found the bride and bridegroom locked in each

other's arms on the beach, and the day after that the whole town went to the *death-wedding*, as we called the funeral." This conclusion, as well as the whole melancholy scene, took such strong hold of my imagination, that I could not shake off its effect, till the bustle on the quay of Honfleur roused me from my reveries.

The traveller who arrives in the steamer in the harbour of Honfleur, and observes the busy and animated scene on the two quays, will, certainly, at the first moment, form a wrong estimate of the character of the town. The whole *beau monde* of Honfleur, all the loungers, many who have business with persons arriving there, the waiters at the hotels and inns, who thrust their cards into the hands of passengers, the conductors of the coaches for Caen, Rouen, and the environs, who with loud voice proclaim the time of their departure, and how many places they have still to dispose of, are here mingled one among another, so that it is not without difficulty, and perhaps a few punches in the ribs, that you can make your way through them. But all this bustle subsides in the next ten minutes, and is not renewed till the departure of the steamer. With the exception of these two moments, which form an epoch in the monotonous life of the inhabitants of Honfleur, the town is dull and dead; the streets are empty, and you meet nobody, unless here and there an individual who has perhaps left his business for a moment to call upon a neighbour.

Honfleur, the origin of which is buried in the

night of antiquity, was, before the building of Havre, a place of considerable commercial importance : but, since the foundation of that town, the number of its inhabitants has dwindled from seventeen thousand to eight thousand. The name of Honfleur the town owes to the Saxons or Franks, and it may give some weight to the popular notion that it was built by pirates. Indeed this alone is sufficient to attest the ancient presence of Germans in this country. In the manners and customs of this antique town, one meets with other indications of that circumstance.

The position of Honfleur, especially before Havre was built, must have drawn to it the attention of those who wished to be masters of the river. Hence it was frequently besieged by the English, several times taken, but the assailants were oftener repulsed. In the wars between the Catholics and the Protestants, it was sometimes in possession of the one, sometimes of the other party ; and, hostile to innovations, when occupied by the Leaguers, it signalized itself by a desperate resistance to Henry IV., who did at last reduce it, but not without immense exertions. Noted in ancient times for their commerce, the inhabitants of Honfleur were likewise the best and most daring seamen, and this character they still maintain. Benoit Paulmier, of Honfleur, was one of the first who sailed round the Cape of Good Hope after Vasco di Gama ; Lelièvre, another townsman, first formed commercial connexions for France with Java and Sumatra ; rear-admiral Ha-

melin, who in the last war with Spain commanded the French fleet before Cadiz, rear-admiral Motard, and Captain Morel Beaulieu, show that down to the present day the natives of Honfleur have not disgraced their forefathers. The great majority of the people of Honfleur are now fishermen. The trade of the town is limited to the importation of Norway timber and English coal, and to the exportation of poultry, eggs, and fruit, to England. This trade with England is still of very considerable importance, and amounts annually to 2,500,000 kilogrammes, half of the total export of these articles in the Channel. There are likewise in Honfleur some manufactories of chemical products, a sugar-refinery, and lastly the wives of the fishermen and labourers employ themselves in lace-making in those hours when they are not obliged to assist their husbands. Honfleur beer too is talked of in Normandy; but it is bad enough, and only a little better than the beverage in general to which people here are pleased to give the name of beer.

The character of the town is dull and melancholy. The houses are old, but they derive no venerable appearance from their antiquity, for they are mostly small, painted and whitewashed, roofed with slate, and the walls in part covered with the same material. The people are honest, bold, reckless of danger, persevering, and attached to old institutions. The men are robust, in general not tall, and slender. The women are handsome, and you frequently see among them enchanting figures.

The attachment of the people of Honfleur to old things and old customs, struck travellers two centuries ago, when they saw them in their somewhat antique costume. Evelyn, about the middle of the seventeeth century, says: — "Honfleur is a poor fishing-town, not remarkable for any thing but the singular though practical dress of the people. They make their clothes here of the skins of bears and other animals, where, as in other places along the coast, they go in wretched rags." Bear-skins, indeed, are no longer in vogue, but the people of Honfleur are no followers of the modern fashions. They are what they were, bluff, hearty Normans; the men excellent fathers, the mothers industrious housewives. The very circumstance that the fishermen's wives here, as in other parts of Normandy, besides the work which they have to do for their husbands in the way of their business, and their domestic concerns, find time for lace-making, is evidence in their favour. But they are more than industrious workwomen, for a trait that is here related of their conduct during the last war between England and France would serve to prove, if such a circumstance really happened, that they are also courageous and devoted wives. The story is this.

The commander of the English naval force off this part of the French coast, having formed the design of penetrating into the mouths of the Seine and Orne, gave orders for capturing all the fishermen of Honfleur, who had previously been suffered to pursue their avocation unmolested, and

keep them as prisoners on board the English ships, as they had one and all refused to pilot them into the river. A few fishing-boats, which were lucky enough to escape, carried these tidings to Honfleur. The wives of the captured men, instead of indulging in useless lamentations, resolved to embark in the vessels which were yet left, to steer for the English fleet, and peremptorily demand the release of their husbands. Accordingly, the flotilla of fishing-smacks, *manned* exclusively by women, sailed out of the harbour, and made direct for the admiral's ship. Having reached her, they sent a deputation to the admiral, charged to insist on the release of their husbands, or at least on sharing their imprisonment, and to declare that, in case of the refusal of both these demands, they would clamber on board without ceremony.

It is easy to conceive what an impression this threat of the sea-amazons of Honfleur must have produced on the commander. After laughing and joking with them for some time, he thought fit to release the men; the women returned with them in triumph, and entered the harbour amidst the acclamations of all Honfleur. If this story be true, I cannot help thinking that it reflects as much honour on the forbearance and humanity of the British admiral as on the patriotic spirit of the fishermen, and the conjugal attachment of their helpmates.

We find a passage in early history strongly illustrative of the martial spirit of the Norman women of those days. Ethelred, king of England, sent a

fleet and an army to Normandy, with orders to lay waste the whole country with fire and sword, to spare nothing but Mont St. Michel, and to bring back to him Richard II., duke of Normandy, alive, and with his hands bound behind him. Three months afterwards, the shattered remains of this army returned to England. "Most potent king," said its commander, "we have not seen Duke Richard, but to our mishap, we had to fight with the savage people of a country, where we found not only very brave men but also women, who rushed into the thickest of the fray, and who smashed the sculls of their stoutest adversaries with the yoke by means of which they carry their water-buckets." It was to the women of Lower Normandy in which Honfleur is situated, that the English commander gave this character.

The Germans and the Gauls may alike lay claim to the bravery of the women of Normandy as being derived from them: Tacitus tells us how the women of the ancient Germans fought, and another ancient writer (Marcellin. lib. xv., c. 11.) says concerning those of the Gauls: "Several foreigners united would not be able to withstand one Gaul assisted by his wife; for these women have formidable weapons in their feet as well as their fists, the blows of which produce the effect of a stone flung at the head." For my part, I am disposed to think that in the intrepidity of the Honfleur women the Gallic principle is more predominant than the German; for cultivation has made the German

women much more patient and gentle than the French.

The English seem never to have been very successful with the French women. We have seen how they were sent home by those of Normandy, and a few centuries later they were driven out of France by two women, the Maid of Orleans and Agnes Sorel. That no grudge is on this account borne towards them, and those of Honfleur in particular, is evident from the number of English families constantly residing there.

Whoever would study the poetry of the mariner's life ought to fix himself for a while in a fishing-village or small coast-town like Honfleur, chiefly inhabited by fishermen and pilots. Among the seafaring people of the larger ports, the sailors of the royal navy act the most conspicuous part; but this class downward is so brutalized that the study of it can excite only profound disgust. The fishermen, on the contrary, owing to causes to which I have already adverted, are in general not only courageous seamen, but a vigorous, hearty race, sound in soul and body. Whoever wishes to make himself acquainted with their character must observe them at home with their families, at market, on board their vessels, and during a storm. At home, industrious and gentle as lambs, but, when excited, bold as lions; at market, honest, clever, and sometimes cunning; on board, strict, stern, silent, and imperious; and lastly, when the storm comes on, hastening towards the shore, yet looking around with scrutinizing eye,

to see whether there is any vessel in danger and in need of succour, or if on shore, flinging themselves into the frail bark, defying the sea and its utmost fury, risking their lives without considering, without hesitating, to save those of others—such are the vicissitudes in the humble career of these people, equally plain, unassuming, and intrepid.

The moment the traveller steps out of the steamer, he is usually surrounded by beggar-boys, and asked if he would like to be conducted to the Côte de Grace. If he has nothing particular to do, let him take one of these urchins for his guide; but, if he can so contrive it, let him ascend the hill when the sun is about setting. A broad path, bordered on both sides by thick bushes, allowing only here and there a glimpse of the distant prospect, leads to the top of the hill. On arriving there, you first see on the right a missionary cross as high as a house, and on the left, embosomed in trees, the chapel of Notre Dame de Grace.

On emerging from the shady path and reaching the foot of the cross, a view such as you rarely meet with opens upon you. You stand on the margin of a steep and pretty high rock, commanding a prospect of the Seine, the opposite bank, and the boundless sea, dotted with sails as far as the eye can discern. Small barks cross one another, some hastening into port, others flying out, like swallows in a morning for food for their young.

Here and there, between these barks, you perceive the swelling canvass of a three-masted vessel, steadily ploughing the waves—an eagle among the swallows. On the other side, again, steamers, like monsters, vomit fresh clouds of smoke, and dash through the boiling billows. By way of contrast, at the foot of the hill on which we are standing lies a small tract of land interspersed with fragments of rock, surrounded by patches of greensward, with cattle grazing upon them—before us the epic of the sea in its awful beauty, at our feet the idyl of a rural landscape in the profoundest repose.

And then a sunset on this spot! I was here one evening when the firmament was covered with dark clouds. In the west one stripe of azure sky was perceptible, with heavy clouds above and below it. As the sun approached the sea, he tinged the margin of the clouds bordering that open space, and the tints were reflected by the whole expanse of sea between La Côte de Grace and the horizon. At length the sun burst forth in full splendour at that opening. He was reflected in the sea, where he created a fiery torrent of boiling, leaping, gushing gold, the source of which was at our feet, and which was lost in the distance. This torrent of gold was the more beautiful from being sharply defined between the black clouds reflected by the sea on either side of it. Here and there a vessel was sailing in this stream, and threw back a radiance like the halo that we see around the head of a saint or martyr.

On this spot I would fain have built myself a tabernacle, had there not been already a chapel there, to which all the devout people of the country and travelling foreigners make pilgrimages. The people felt like myself that an hermitage was an indispensable accompaniment to such a spot, and therefore preserved the tradition which places the hill in possession of its right. At the foot of the Côte de Grace, on those little meadows between the masses of rock, report places the hermitage of an abbot, named Geremer de Pontalle. The monks had already begun to discover that, in spite of the vows of chastity, poverty, and humility, it was possible to live right jovially in a convent, when this abbot, a very pious man, who prayed and fasted a great deal, strove to persuade his friars that they could not do better than follow his example. The jolly monks were highly offended, and conceived a grudge against the abbot; but, as he had authority to add force to persuasion, they were obliged to dissemble. At length the restraint became too irksome, and they determined to stop the trade of the reformer by a little revolution, and to get rid of him. A miracle—so says tradition—rescued him from the hands of his rebellious brethren. He fled from the convent, retired to the rocks at the foot of La Côte de Grace, and turned hermit. The monks soon discovered his retreat, and sent deputies, who assured him of their repentance, and besought him to return to the convent. So long as he refused, all went on well, and the monks lived as they

pleased. At length, giving credit to their declarations of repentance, the abbot promised them to return on the following day to the convent, but was prevented by a miracle; for on the next day the monks related that in the night, while they were singing the Horæ, the abbot stood bodily before them, and told them that he had just gone up to heaven. They therefore proclaimed him a saint, and built him an altar. A few days afterwards, the fishermen at the foot of the hill found a monk's frock in their nets, and a little further off a body, which would almost lead one to suppose that the pious abbot had pulled off his clothes before he commenced his ascension, and that in his flight he had not met with better luck than Icarus. The people, on the other hand, said that the monks had killed him, which is scarcely conceivable, seeing that he had already been saved by one miracle, and a second would have cost no more trouble than the first. When you find such stories as this current among the people, you are astonished that, in spite of them, the influence of the monks and of the clergy in general could so long maintain its ground; and nothing but the all-prevailing consciousness of our own nothingness can explain this contradiction. Man seldom loses the feeling that he is launched at random into the tempest of life, and therefore grasps at the first plank within his reach, in hopes that it will bring him in safety to the shore.

The chapel of Notre Dame de Grace is just such a chapel as many hundred others: it is the

successor of one more ancient, built by William the Conqueror, because in a storm, before his expedition to England, he had solicited a little miracle from the Virgin Mary, and she had been graciously pleased to grant his prayer. The sea subsequently washed away that part of the rock of the Côte de Grace, on which the Conqueror's chapel stood; and it would almost seem as if Neptune had resolved to revenge himself in this manner on Notre Dame for all the vessels that she had saved from his clutches. Pious inhabitants of Honfleur then built the present chapel, and proved that the victory of the sea over the rock, on which stood the temple where its power was contested, had by no means shaken that rock upon which their faith was founded.

The chapel contains a great number of pictures and other objects attesting the miraculous protection of Notre Dame de Grace. Crutches, silver hands and feet, arms and legs, are every where the order of the day in wonder-working churches, and there is no lack of them here. But, besides these articles, there are great numbers of ships painted on canvass, carved in wood, or engraved on brass, which have all been suspended here by seamen, because the Blessed Virgin had brought them safe into port in spite of storms and weather. In Normandy, you have frequent occasion to remark the religious spirit of the people, which, however, is too apt to beget superstition. Here, on La Côte de Notre Dame de Grace, may be witnessed a scene that certainly occurs no where else but in Italy or

Spain. Formerly, it was very often the case that, when a vessel had outlived a storm, in which the crew never failed to implore the protection of the mother of God, the whole of them, barefoot and stripped to their shirts, performed a pilgrimage to the chapel of Notre Dame de Grace, and there returned thanks before they went home. This kind of pilgrimage may still be witnessed occasionally, though, indeed, it has become much more rare.

Whit-Monday is held here as a great festival, on which thousands of visiters from far and near throng to this spot. The little chapel can scarcely be seen for tents; and I can attest that the rusty voices of the choristers, and the bray of the serpents in the morning, are as nothing in comparison with the rejoicings of the people, and the songs of the lads and lasses in the evening; and, as there were no nunneries in the time of the Virgin, I cannot think that she will take this evening service much amiss.

A second path leads from the top of the hill over a spot that is called Mont Joli. This Mont Joli is only a few hundred paces from the chapel, and forms a sort of plateau, from which a zigzag path runs to the foot of the hill. When you have reached the plateau, you have before you a prospect as different from the other as a Swiss landscape is from a sea-view. The hill on which you stand shuts out the sea. Before you lies the current of the Seine for miles and miles, enclosed completely with hills—a lake to all appearance, just like those

of the Alps. At ebb-tide, there are formed in this lake numberless sand-banks, large and small, to which flocks of sea-birds resort, sunning themselves, or seeking their prey, which they are obliged to share with the fishermen, who frequently scare them away. Between these sand-banks, the river divides into a thousand small streams, till, further up, we see one unbroken mirror. The banks, rising in the form of terraces, are clad in the most luxuriant verdure, and at intervals you discern the summer residences of those whom the world agrees to call happy. Lastly, on our left, in a gently rising vale, lies the town, with its harbour, its small church, and its cross, a picture of repose beside the active scene produced by the shipping sailing up and down the Seine.

Whenever I have been at Havre, I have turned pilgrim, and regularly paid tribute to the Côte de Notre Dame de Grace; and I thank Heaven that it has bestowed on me imagination enough to fancy the presence of the beloved object, when I have been at a distance from it.

He who would study popular life in this part of France, would do well to repair on the 17th of July to the beautiful meadow about the chapel of St. Clair, below Honfleur. Here he may witness a scene worthy of Teniers—a fair for the hiring of farm-servants, what in England is called a statute-fair. All the lads and lasses of the environs, who

are leaving their service, go to St. Clair, in their best attire, to exhibit themselves, and all the landholders who want a man-servant, or the farmers' wives who are in need of a maid, attend to examine the goods, and to bargain for the ensuing year. In these bargains, the character of the Lower Normans is clearly displayed. The peasants of Normandy were for many centuries a conquered and oppressed people; and hence it is that, with all their uprightness in matters of business, they combine no little prudence and frequently a degree of cunning. We often meet with such contradictions in life, and it seems as though Nature had purposely created one quality as a bulwark for the others, and *vice versa*.

This cuninng of the Norman peasants is frequently exemplified in the clearest manner in the conduct both of the hirers and of those who offer themselves for hire. Those who are seeking a service come, of course, in their Sunday clothes, the lads in a new smockfrock, whip in hand, and at the end of the lash a nosegay, as a sign that they want a situation; the lasses are prinked and pranked in their best, in the high Cauchois cap, and with the distinctive nosegay on the left breast.

Presently the sexes separate: the men range themselves on one side, the women on the other. All of them, you may be certain, are engrossed by the thought how to secure a service for the ensuing year, and yet they appear to be occupied by any thing but that which they have most at heart.

The most unrestrained fun and frolic prevail in the groupe of the young men. They laugh, they banter one another, they scatter their wit abroad, and scarcely wait for a reply before they are ready with the rejoinder. But they all know that the farmers are close by, and that, to them, this apparently innocent mirth, this sportive wit, must serve as proof, that he who is readiest at repartee must be the cleverest fellow among them. Accordingly, it is often the case that, after a humorous sally has excited the general laughter of servants and masters, one or other of the latter takes a fancy to him by whom it has been uttered. If these manœuvres have not the desired success, they begin to talk about work; one will tell, as if merely for talking's sake, how he yesterday shoved his loaded cart out of a deep hole in a dirty lane, while another will boast of having thrashed so many sheaves of corn in a day for a wager, and that he is ready to lay the same wager again any day. A third, to show his strength, grasps his tall, stout neighbour from behind, and holds him up, for a while, in the air. I should never have done, were I to attempt to enumerate all the petty and mostly ingenious devices, which are employed by these rustics to show their cleverness and to obtain higher wages for their services.

In the other groupe, that of the females, stratagems of a different kind are resorted to. The principal object with them is, to produce a favourable impression by external appearance; therefore they all look extremely demure. Many of these

lasses have sweethearts in the other groupe, but this secret is only betrayed now and then, by a stolen and, as they imagine, unobserved glance. They, too, talk of work, and what they can do, and all they have done in the past year. Great merriment prevails among them also, but it is not suffered to exceed the bounds of decorum; and, in regard to most of them, it would require a close scrutiny before you could give one a preference to the rest.

Those who come to hire, meanwhile, have all their wits about them, as well as those who come to be hired. They, too, seem at first to have no thought whatever of looking for a servant. They come and go, and mingle among the groupes, talking to one or the other, but not with the person on whom they have cast their eye, contriving, however, to be near enough to hear, and to be heard, by him. Very often, a farmer will go to the next neighbour of such a one, and inquire where he has lived and what wages he asks; he draws the other imperceptibly into the conversation, and incidentally puts the same questions to him. Thus one word begets another, till the parties strike a bargain and shake hands; earnest is given, and the nosegay untied from the whip, or removed, in the case of females, from the left to the right breast.

Towards evening, there are but few left who have not taken down the sign of the nosegay, or transferred it from the left to the right; and these retire at length dejected, and abandon the field to their more fortunate competitors.

The anxieties of the day are succeeded by the pleasures of the evening and the night. A number of tents are pitched in a meadow, to which the publicans of the environs bring supplies from their kitchens and cellars. Here the earnest is generally paid after the bargains are concluded, and this finds its way into the pockets of the publicans. All reserve is thrown aside. The lad again acknowledges his lass; and, amidst dancing, mirth, and bumpers of cider, to the prosperity of their new employers, they forget alike their old toils and those which await them, in those pleasures and enjoyments which place master and servant upon an equality.

On my return in the evening from this human cattle-market at St. Clair to the steamer, I seated myself by a tradesman's family from Havre, and soon learned that this gentleman had been to St. Clair to look for a maid-servant. He seemed to be not quite satisfied, and complained bitterly that it was becoming more and more difficult to find a good servant of either sex. I know not whether this is the case in other parts, but, in regard to Havre, I can easily account for the circumstance, since the spirit of independence in France is spreading downward among the people; and the flourishing state of the country, the division of landed property, and the certainty of finding employment and subsistence, produce a disinclination to voluntary servitude. My neighbour was extremely sore upon this subject, and prophesied that in fifty years we should

be obliged to clean our own boots. What will be the end of this! With what giant strides is the world hastening to destruction!

I paid no attention to the rest, for I had something better to do. The sun had set before the vessel quitted the little harbour, and, before we reached the middle of the stream, night enveloped all around us. We heard the rolling of distant thunder, and now and then a flash of lightning, darting in zigzags athwart the sky, afforded for a second a spectral glance of remote objects. Then all became dark again. Silence prevailed on board, for the approaching storm had closed the lips of almost all the passengers. The vessel steadily pursued her course, flinging back the luminous waves on either side, and leaving a long bright stripe in her wake. This scene is not to be described; I doubt even whether it can be painted.

At length we were off Havre. The town, with its illuminated streets and the thousand lights of the Côte d'Ingouville, seemed to hurry past us; while the gas-lamps, sometimes in a straight line, sometimes one above another, and sometimes huddled together, formed a thousand curious figures. On entering the port, a long peal of thunder proclaimed our arrival and bade us welcome.

CHAPTER XIII.

A Journey by Diligence—The Imperiale, and fellow-travellers — Fecamp—Breakfast Adventure — Village of Cany — Dieppe— Appearance of the Town—View from the Pier — The Baths— The Ball-Room — Deserted Shops — Fisheries — Ancient Importance of Dieppe— Its present Insignificance — State of Parties—Newspapers—Unsociable Character of the Inhabitants.

"MAN proposes, God disposes," is an old adage, but it is one to which, notwithstanding its antiquity and general acceptance, I, for one, am not disposed to subscribe. God favours and prospers those energetic men, who say: "To will is to do." Nay, he who has once proceeded so far as to will may boldly lift up his voice and command, for the mass will obey and repeat in all humility: — "Man proposes, God disposes."

Just at this moment, indeed, I have no particular right to set up for the panegyrist of those who *will*: for six weeks ago I meant to take a trip to Dieppe, and arrived here but yesterday; I meant to go by steamer from Havre to Dieppe, and was obliged to travel by diligence; I meant, like the great folks, to bathe at Dieppe, to give myself an air of importance, and could not come hither till the rough

weather had blown away all the fashionable invalids.

I took my place in the second story of the diligence, called in France *imperiale*, or imperial seat, on which account I chose it. There is some little danger in climbing up to this imperial throne, but, when once up above, it does your heart good to look down upon the petty creatures beneath. As in life, so here, it is the aristocracy who can afford to pay for the *coupé*, that sit just beneath the emperor, and over whose heads he can play what pranks he pleases. The middling class in the *interieur* look quietly on happen what will. Lastly, it is further characteristic for France that the imperiale is in general occupied by the canaille, by persons of the lower class, so that the sovereignty of the people is virtually proclaimed every day upon all the high roads.

We were this time an imperial triumvirate, two Englishmen besides myself. I do not include the conductor's dog, which lay behind us over the *interieur*. Chance, accident, are droll fellows; and, when they placed the dog behind the imperial triumvirate, as a kind of *vielle garde*, *garde du corps*, or municipal guard, above the middle class, assuredly they never gave it a thought that the brute was in his proper place there. For my part, all sorts of thoughts passed through my head. The dog had a stump-tail, and I recollected having read somewhere that, at some place or other, the practice of cutting off dogs' tails prevailed so long, that at

last they came into the world without that appendage; and it occurred to me that men have at times been treated like dogs, till at last they have wished to be treated no otherwise. Man proposes, God disposes.

It was scarcely an hour after we started, when my two co-emperors prepared to break their fast. Their seat only was imperial; the breakfast, like that of the meanest labourer or beggar, consisted of a bit of dry bread. Humble as it was, the dog longed for a share of it, crept to us, and howled dismally. This was music to their repast; but, when the performer had the audacity to solicit from the high folks, as he would have done from honest citizens, a recompence for his pains, he was rewarded with a kick and an energetic execration. The poor beast could not forget the disappointment, and continued howling with short intermissions till we reached Fecamp, in spite of our threats and even blows. I wished most sincerely that the breakfast had choked him.

The morning was cool, and the country beautiful. It was a treat to overlook it from our lofty seat, and I was frequently sorry that the vehicle rolled so rapidly from particular scenes. Shortly before we reached Fecamp, the country became more dreary, and naked rocks and downs covered with heath proclaimed the proximity of the sea.

At Fecamp we descended for half an hour from our imperial seat, my two colleagues to take their second, and I my first, breakfast. This was neither

better nor worse than the meals usually prepared for travellers, who must be content with what they can get. We had, moreover, time enough for dessert before we were summoned by the conductor. One of my companions was the first to ask the landlady how much he had to pay, and she replied with the interrogation "Sans vin?" The Englishman turned pale; and it was a few seconds before he recovered his utterance to discharge a volley of energetic English curses; but, recollecting that he was in France, he added: *C'est abominable! c'est un guet-apens!* and other expressions highly complimentary to the hostess. She, poor woman, stood as if thunderstruck. *Mais, monsieur*, she exclaimed, *que voulez-vous? C'est horrible!* rejoined my fellow-traveller. *Je ne payerai pas cela! Cent vingt sous pour un méc hant déjeuner! c'est abominable!* The matter was now cleared up; we laughed heartily, and my fellow-traveller was good-humoured enough to join us, when we explained to him that the question simply was *Sans vin?* and had nothing to do with *cent vingt sous*. He paid his two francs without grumbling, and that was quite enough.

These were nearly all my travelling adventures, for even the conductor's dog thenceforward kept silence. He, too, had filled his belly, and ceased his inconvenient opposition. Now and then the uniformity of the road was broken by a hill, which our conductor always begged us to walk up. Beyond Cany, a manufacturing village, the country afforded a rich treat to us, or rather to me, for my two com-

panions informed me that they had missed the steamer at Havre, and were very anxious to catch another at Dieppe, for which reason, I suppose, they ran up hill as if they had not a moment to lose. About midway I was quite out of breath. I let my companions hurry on, and looked back after the diligence. One of the finest prospects imaginable met my view. In a valley on the right lay the village embowered in foliage, which only here and there afforded a glimpse of a roof, and of the modest church at the extremity of the place. From the village ran, for four or five miles on the left, a beautiful luxuriant vale of meadow-land, intersected by alleys, and enlivened by a streamlet, and at the further end of it was a handsome chateau. Beside the high road there was a second valley, which united with the other, and beyond both rose the undulating lines of several hills, clothed with thick woods.

I was sorry when the diligence overtook me, and I was obliged to mount again. About four in the afternoon we reached Dieppe. The everlasting *garçons d'hôtel*, who never fail in any town in France to take travellers on their arrival by storm, came to pay us their compliments. I was in not a little embarrassment, for I had not forgotten by way of precaution to note down the address of a tolerable inn in my pocket-book, and then left my pocket-book behind, because I had got a new one. Thus, amidst the storm raised by the *garçons*, I was without helm or anchor. Three addressed me in English, one in

Russian—I believe, at least, that it was Russian—but I continued mute as a fish, and, therefore, they decided *C'est un français.* I know not precisely why my silence should gain me this title of honour, but it rendered me good service, for they all quitted me, and fell upon the other travellers. Thus I could listen undisturbed, while the representatives of the different inns sounded forth their praises, and at last chose the Hotel des Etrangers, where I heard it said one might dine *à la carte*, and have a decent room at a moderate price. This hotel I can recommend. After changing my clothes I made a tour of the town before dinner or supper, whichever you chuse to call it. Dieppe was cannonaded in 1694 by an English fleet, and almost totally destroyed. Owing to this circumstance the place is better built than the majority of the old Norman towns. The streets are tolerably straight and regular, and the houses mostly of brick. But, in spitè of its youth, Dieppe has a very grave, almost antiquated, look; the dark or ash-grey colour predominates. The houses in general are not lofty, having rarely more than two or three floors, which proves that the town is not over-populated. The streets show but little animation, and it is only about the harbour, when the fishing-smacks are going out or coming in, that rather more bustle is found. Only a couple of merchantmen were lying here, and but very few fishing-boats in proportion to the space.

Proceeding along the quays, you arrive at the

pier, from which an imposing spectacle presents itself. On the right and left extend lofty chalk cliffs, whose foot runs out into the sea. The pier is situated in the centre of a spacious semicircle formed by the steep shore. I was favoured by Fortune, which here presented me with a sunset, exquisite as a heart that always throbs higher at such scenes could desire. The ebb-tide had left bare the beach at the entrance of the harbour, and across it ran a multitude of streamlets, reflecting the glow of sunset in their course to the sea. A fishing-smack had run aground on one of those little hills of shingle, by which the contrasts formed by the sea, the town, the rocks, the beach, were rendered still more lively. Out at sea fishing-boats were moving to and fro, and frequently crossing the streak of gold which the sun threw from the west over the waves. The distant sky was overcast with dense heavy clouds, tinted by the sun, and lastly the rocks to westward reflected his rays upon sea and town. Nature alone speaks a universal language.

Till the sun had sunk beneath the sea, this sight chained me to the pier. I then walked along the shore to the baths. I met but few pedestrians, and in the buildings of the bathing establishment profound silence prevailed. I had hoped to find at least part of the company still at Dieppe, and was mortified to see the profound desolation which reigned here. A posting-bill, which informed me that there would be a ball that evening, gave me fresh hopes. The fair visiters are at their toilet, thought I.

This hope accompanied me back to my hotel, whither I returned to dinner. The ball was to begin at eight o'clock, and I resolved to shew my consequence by not going till nine. The time seemed very long till then; and, if I had not deemed a new pair of gloves indispensable, and stopped to chat a quarter of an hour with the female who served me with them, I verily believe that I should have been at the place by half-past eight.

At length I entered the ball-room. It was handsomely fitted up and brilliantly lighted. There was a complete orchestra, and a company consisting of three ladies and seven gentlemen, who looked in amazement at one another. A very lively conversation was going forward between one of the ladies and two gentlemen; the others were scattered upon three benches rising one above another, and kept their eyes fixed upon the door, which opened only when the uneasy host entered or went out. I was the last arrival; and in about a quarter of an hour the landlord again entered, and told us that, for want of a sufficient company, the ball could not take place, that our money should be returned, and that he wished us a very good night. In this manner I gained three francs and a pair of new gloves, which I shall save for the next ball I go to in Paris.

The frequenters of bathing places are the birds of passage of society at the present day. The first cold north-east wind generally drives them back to their homes. But I had hoped that not all of them

at least would have flown away. I had miscalculated. Subsequently I was several times at the baths. All was deserted and desolate, excepting that in the reading room I found a few invalid officers and a lady, formerly one of the attendants of the duchess of Berry, who had settled at Dieppe out of attachment to the princess.

For the rest, Dieppe is reputed to be during the season one of the pleasantest sea-bathing places in Europe. I have no doubt that it is. Bountiful Nature has here provided the grand requisites for enjoyment, and where she left any thing to wish for, the deficiency has been supplied by the proprietors of the baths and the municipality of Dieppe. The bathing-house consists of a long gallery, running out on either side into a spacious hall. That on the right is appropriated to the gentlemen, and contains a library and a reading-room, furnished with the French and English periodicals. The hall on the left belongs to the ladies: a piano-forte and several collections of the most amusing lithographic prints are destined to kill time with decency.

An iron railing encloses a spacious yard, and with pleasure I there beheld all my old acquaintance of the Champs Elysés, caroussels, elastic bomb-projectors, swings, and the like: and my imagination had full licence to fancy the most enchanting female forms engaged in the various sports for which these things are destined. Not a living creature disturbed me in my reveries.

On the left, at the end of the courtyard, is a

restaurant; but not a chimney emitted smoke, and doors and windows were closed. Outside the railing which encloses the sanctuary, is a circle of shops of all sorts, a miniature Palais royal. Milliners, hair-dressers, jewellers, booksellers, wine-merchants, umbrella-makers, opticians, and thirty more, settle here during the season and exhibit their goods for sale.

All these buildings and galleries are of wood, and at first sight one would suppose that, resembling the scenes of a theatre, they were erected on some festive occasion merely for the day. But they are destined to defy the tempests of the sea, and they do defy them in their weakness. This is their strength, as well as woman's. But the contrast here is striking. Before us the sea, beside us the rocky cliff, and the massive fortified castle of Dieppe, behind us the towers of the town-wall, which even the English bombs could not damage; and beneath our feet the slight boards, and over our heads a roof equally slight, covering a place devoted exclusively to pleasure. Those resist the sea, which punishes their resistance, undermining the foot of the rocks, and from year to year rending from them fragments and engulphing them in its abyss—these smile blandly upon it and disarm its rage, and it passes them by, merely flinging over them in sport its veil of foam, and making them glisten the more brilliantly in the sun when this foam is dissolved into pearls. It seems as though the god of ocean gave this command to his billows: — "Touch not

this place, for here an invalid was cured, there one in health enjoyed himself, and the whole has been erected merely by way of thank-offering unto me !"

I came too late to witness the sports that are held here, and could only describe them from hearsay. Whoever is interested about them may procure a description of them as well as I: but so much I may add, that they are merry enough.

It is only during the last twenty years that Dieppe is become a fashionable bathing-place. The duchess of Berry, who visited the town every year, first brought it into notice. The revolution of 1830 operated injuriously upon it. A trip to Dieppe, however, had become indispensable to the Parisians; and, if formerly it was frequented by people of fashion because the duchess went thither, they are now so accustomed to the way that they need no bell-wether to lead them. Dieppe gains annually many thousands by its bathing-establishments; indeed, it is owing almost entirely to them that the town is gradually recovering itself.

Dieppe is a sort of parasitic plant. It lives at the expence of others, at the expence of the guests visiting or passing by it. No sooner have the bathers taken wing, than the herring supplies their place. In the middle of October, this fish traverses the waters of the Channel from Boulogne to Havre. One hundred and twenty or thirty smacks are engaged in this fishery. The herrings caught in the October season are sent off fresh, and mostly consumed in Paris and the provinces.

In the middle of August also, from sixty to eighty vessels of 25 to 30 tons each, and with a crew of about fifteen men, sail from Dieppe on the herring fishery. At this period the herring frequents the northern coasts of Britain, and the fishermen salt it on board. These herrings are universally preferred.

In the month of July it is at the expence of another guest that the people of Dieppe live. About this time the mackarel arrives in the waters of Picardy, whither the fishermen of Dieppe go in quest of it.

But the fishermen of this town are not content with the booty which takes the trouble to meet them, as it were, half way. In the months of February and March, a great number of vessels leave Dieppe for the waters of Newfoundland, to catch cod, which they bring home partly salted and partly dried.

The fishery is the principal, or, more properly speaking, the only important pursuit of the people of Dieppe. Setting aside the trade arising from that, the commerce of Dieppe is not worth mentioning. One branch of industry only flourishes here, that is the working in ivory. Every fourth or fifth house in Dieppe is a shop for these toys, or, if you prefer the term, curiosities. It must be confessed that they often display great skill and patience. But, though they may occasionally be valuable as works of art, it cannot be denied that the artist has thrown away his labour upon an ungrateful field. The pious purchase a Christ or a Madonna in bone, heretics a Voltaire or Jean Jaques, old soldiers a

Napoleon, and the bathers all sorts of trifles. Some hundreds of industrious workmen gain a decent subsistence by these performances; so let us not grudge those who are fond of them these playthings.

Dieppe was formerly one of the chief seaports of France. I could relate its history, from which whoever chose might learn a good deal. But time and space permit only a few observations. The mercantile class here was anciently wealthy enough to equip whole fleets of ships of war, to procure for itself reparation of injuries done by states and princes, and to display its power when a king of France needed the assistance of a brave naval force.

The history of Dieppe is that of the Italian republics, of the German free Hanse towns. Dieppe became wealthy, powerful, and respected in the same way that these did; and it sank into its present state owing to the same cause by which these declined. Liberty was the tree from which they plucked their golden fruit. As I have already observed, *that* government is the best which governs the least. The ancient towns were independent; they did their business themselves, and therefore did it well. The taxes raised from the town remained in the town, and the townsmen themselves decided in what way they might be applied most advantageously for the general welfare. For them there was no government to take them under its protection, and therefore they protected themselves; they were not compelled to ask a higher power whether

they might do this or that for the benefit of the whole; and thus whatever was necessary to be done was done at the moment when it was wanted. The guardian is always a worse manager than the real owner, than the father, who studies only the advantage of his children, and has no desire to live at their expence. In France, the government now protects all towns in one and the same manner, so that they certainly cannot be ruined by any inconsiderate step, nor yet by any that has been well considered, but by the inactivity in which they are kept. They are logically prevented from falling, inasmuch as they are forbidden to stir.

In the history of Dieppe this is most clearly exemplified. So long as this town was independent, it advanced with giant strides. Without the aid of any other rulers than its own magistrates, it could build churches and castles, fortify the town, excavate docks, and throw bridges across them. Its merchantmen traversed the seas, and discovered distant lands, and planted colonies in them. Traders of Dieppe were the first Europeans who sailed to the eastern coasts of Africa and settled there; they were the first who doubled the Cape of Good Hope. Auber and Verazar, two Dieppe seamen, discovered Canada, and the brothers Parmentier the islands of Fernambuck. Dieppe seamen, led by Guerrard and Roussel, established themselves even before the Spaniards at Maragnon in South America, and Ribaud was the first European who settled in Florida. A single seaman of Dieppe, Pierre, became

the terror of all nations, and a single Dieppe merchant, Ango, could declare war against the king of Portugal, and force him to send ambassadors to sue for peace.

And what is now this once opulent and powerful commercial town? and how has it become what it is at this day? Has the sea, the source of its former wealth, retreated from it? Are the men of Dieppe incapable of building ships? Have its seamen degenerated? No, all these things are much the same as they were four or five hundred years ago. One thing only is changed. The free town, which acted independently, was drawn into the vortex of the all-absorbing dominion of a Francis I, of a Louis XIV., and from that moment lost its wealth, its power, its importance.

Dieppe, the once opulent seaport town, is now a sea-village. The houses of this sea-village, the ships, are small huts of one floor, and very rarely does a two or a three-decker enter its harbour. The seamen are as hardy and as brave as when a Duquesne arose from their midst; but they are no longer the enterprising merchants, whose vessels frequented the remotest harbours, and created them where there were none. They are now but petty cultivators of the sea, who reap where Heaven throws a harvest in their way, but very seldom pass the limits of their own parish to visit a distant market. And how should it be otherwise? For these twenty years the harbour of Dieppe has needed an improvement that would cost six or eight

millions; and for these twenty years, during which period Dieppe pays perhaps five times the amount in taxes that it used to do, the town has been in vain soliciting the government to undertake this work. And who can doubt that, if the town had as formerly these millions to expend itself, the wants of the place would long ago have been supplied.

The people of Dieppe feel more keenly than they are themselves aware how deeply their town has declined. They seek the cause in the political changes, and are therefore violent politicians. Some of them have a faint notion that the once flourishing state of their town was a fruit of liberty, and these call themselves republicans; others had now and then the good fortune to be invited by the duchess de Berry, or her master of the ceremonies, and to breathe the air of the same room with her highness, and these are most devoted adherents of legitimacy; while a third party, having shorn their sheep at the July revolution, are now thinking of securing their gains, and are therefore *juste-milieus*. Almost all the inhabitants of Dieppe, excepting the fishermen, who belong to no party, are more or less attached to one of these three. The republicans are the most numerous, and consist chiefly of persons of the middle class; the partisans of the government are the more opulent traders, and those of the restoration many old civilians, a few old wealthy Dieppe families, and some nobles. The majority of the national guard are republican, as

the choice of their officers and of the commandant, M. Feret, keeper of the library and editor of the *Memorial Dieppois*, sufficiently proves. The electors of the deputies, on the other hand, are mostly partisans of the present government, whence arises a discord between the deputation and the people, which, if not resolved into harmony, will some time or other oblige the directors of the political concert to re-tune the other instruments, since it is, after all, the national guard that gives the key-note.

Political discussions are carried on in Dieppe with more violence than is generally the case in the provinces. All three parties have their paper—the legitimists, *Le Phare;* the juste milieu, *La Vigie;* the republicans, *Le Memorial Dieppois.* The first is written in general in a decorous and temperate tone; but the second is always in a state of high excitement. It espouses a cause that is desperate in Dieppe, and finds in the *Memorial* an opponent, for whom it is not a match, either in talent or erudition. Hence its attacks mostly become personal in the end, and lead to challenges and to the leaden arguments of pistol-bullets.

The state of things at Dieppe is certainly one cause why political discussions are carried on there with such warmth. For two-thirds of the year the town is almost without occupation, and its inhabitants then have plenty of time to turn their attention to politics. Such is the state of social relations in Dieppe, that it furnishes no means of moderatin

the angry passions. There is not a single family in the town that admits visiters, or throws open its drawing-room. Each lives in his house as though the deserts of Africa commenced at his door. Here are no literary associations, no clubs, no frequented coffee-houses, no reading-rooms, nothing in short that gives sociability to society, and that accustoms men to toleration. In other places too I have found parties, but these met occasionally and conversed together, and treated each other with civility at least, if not cordiality: they were foes who shook hands at the advanced posts, and chatted together familiarly till the trumpet summoned them to the fight. Not so in Dieppe. The people of that town are very honest, clever, industrious, nay, even temperate and moral people; but, in a social point of view, they are real badgers who live in winter upon their fat, without ever quitting their holes. For them beautiful Nature herself seems to have no charms; for, on the noble promenades, on the pier, which affords so striking a prospect, I now and then met with a stranger only, but scarcely ever with a person belonging to the town. Heaven forgive them this sin!—I cannot.

CHAPTER XIV.

Fishing village of Le Pollet—Its Appearance—Its Inhabitants—Their Character—Their Superstition—Their independent Spirit—Marvellous Adventures—Traditions of the Sailors and Fishermen—Pilgrimages of Seamen—Popular Prejudices—History of the Boussards—Conjectures from the Legends of the Polletais that they are of German origin.

Opposite to Dieppe, and separated from it by the harbour only, is situated the fishing village, Le Pollet. This village forms, in fact, part of the town; but, no sooner have you crossed the little bridge of boats, which leads from the town to it, and entered one of the streets, than you may fancy yourself many miles off in another country. Houses, dress, language, race of people, are all different, strange, and new.

The fishermen and fish-sellers of Dieppe inhabit this appendage to the town. Narrow streets, houses built of wood and clay, of a dingy ash-gray or mud colour, may indeed be seen elsewhere; but rarely have they so foreign an air as here. The narrow street is rendered still narrower by a hundred wooden or iron arms, protruded from every window and casement, and upon which fish, nets, and the clothes of the fisher men and women are

hung out to dry. Here you see a gray jacket, there a red petticoat, and close to it a dozen glistening mackarel over a brown net, in which they have just been caught. In every room in these diminutive houses dwells a family—father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, and a whole tribe of grandchildren—for the marriages of the sturdy seafaring people are very prolific. From the street you step at once into the dwelling-room, bed-room, store-room, kitchen, and cellar, all in one. I took a stolen peep at some of them, and observed the beds placed one above another, as in the cabin of a ship, and counted ten, twelve, or more, in a single room. These might indeed be destined for the accommodation of the fishermen, who come during the fishing season from the whole surrounding country to Dieppe; though it is possible enough that they might belong to a single family; for, as I have observed, the marriages of these people are prolific.

Before the doors stand or sit the women of the whole house, six, ten, twelve, in number, mending the old nets, making new ones, or washing and patching the men's clothes. Around them is the whole crew of children, some of them employed, but mostly engaged in the sports of their age. A seaman now and then steps up to them and pays them some coarse compliment, which makes them all laugh; and here and there some veteran, whose weather-beaten face tells that he has defied a hundred storms, stops to chat for a few minutes.

Were I a painter, I would try to represent these scenes:—or perhaps not, for, after all, the life that

reigns here is every thing and not to be painted. And then the smell which impregnates the atmosphere, and without which it is impossible to figure Le Pollet to one's self—how paint that, how express that ethereal, sour, salty sauce to the whole, redolent of tar and train-oil! And it is the sauce that, as in all other instances, gives the thing a flavour. Who can paint, who describe that?

The people too are totally different here. The men are short and stout; the women slender, but robust. A healthy complexion, an animated eye, embellish a face that is in general regular and oval. The features of the men mostly indicate only that bold resolute spirit peculiar to seamen; while those of the women betray not less boldness, but also a certain degree of irony and humour. The women are if any thing more remarkable than the men. The latter resemble seafaring people in general, but the women of Le Pollet are a distinct genus. They are perhaps more men than their husbands. During the absence of the latter, the whole management of the house is in their hands, and they seldom resign it when the men return. It is they who sell the fish that are caught, and thus come in contact with the people of Dieppe, who are further advanced in civilization; hence they soon attain a higher step than their husbands, and so have a right to wield the sceptre. It is they who drag the fishing-boats into and out of harbour; and they share with their husbands many other laborious occupations, which serve to fortify their bodies.

Their masculine habits give them a relish for the pleasures of the men: they never miss their treats and their parties, and sing their song and take their glass with as much glee as their companions of the ruder sex. This somewhat barbarous custom, however, is attended with these good effects, that man and wife more rarely quarrel, that the latter cannot reproach the former with spending all he gets in drink, and that they return home together, and at a very early hour. Let him who wishes to keep a whole skin beware of picking a quarrel with these he-women; for there is no joking with them: but to the Parisian dames who sigh for the emancipation of the sex, I can give no better advice than to marry a Polletais.

Before the last twenty years, the inhabitants of Le Pollet were more remarkable for their costume than they are at present. It now consists in general of the usual fishing dress of Normandy—a long brown or dark blue jacket and trousers, boots covering the thighs as well as legs, or wide canvass upper trousers, and lastly a lacquered sailor hat or a red Phrygian cap. Twenty years ago their costume consisted of a light blue jacket, with white cuffs and collar, trunk hose, high stockings, and shoes with buckles. Civilization is making progress here, and has exterminated many of the peculiarities of the Polletais, and among others their hereditary enmity against the people of Dieppe: but the character of this race is still original enough.

The Polletais is, like most seamen, brave and kind-hearted. The widows and orphans are sup-

ported by them : they send out their nets with the smacks, and what is caught in them is as punctually delivered to the owners as if a husband or father still shared the toil and the danger with his old comrades. No pauper ever applies in vain to a Polletais, when he returns to port laden with his booty.

The grander the nature around us, the more insignificant we appear to ourselves. When the sea rages and dashes against the rocks, when the oak forest roars and the wind uproots trees a thousand years old, then, filled with awe, we pray or we adore. Hence it is that seamen are more pious than we who live upon land, and to whom Nature appears in all her omnipotence much more rarely than to them. The inhabitants of Le Pollet are not less pious than seafaring men in general. I was once in the miners' church at Goslar, and the solemn silence, the subdued tones of their voices, ascending as from the bowels of the earth to heaven, moved me to the bottom of my soul. In the church at Pollet I was affected in a very different manner. Here too, while the priest alone was praying, solemn silence prevailed, but when the fishermen and sailors began to sing, I felt quite uncomfortable. It was as though they were exorcising a tempest, and apprehensive lest the Almighty would not hear them unless they drowned with their singing the voice of the storm. I fancied that I heard, amid the roaring of the waves, now a cry for help, and presently a shriek of agony. But when I looked

around me and saw the sun shining brightly in at the windows, and was thus brought back from the reveries of imagination to the realities of life, my ears were so painfully affected, that I was glad to leave the church as speedily as possible.

A few days afterwards I accidentally witnessed a funeral procession of both sexes, following in silent devotion one whose life had been wrecked to his last home. Even the nearest relatives behind the corpse expressed their grief only in that solemn composure which is natural to persons who have a thousand times looked death in the face without quailing.

From piety to superstition is in general but a step; the limit is a mathematical line. But there are various kinds of superstition. With the one, children are driven to bed, and old women made to hold their tongues. The other is the poetry of common sense, which strives to solve the riddles of Nature. Of this kind was the superstition of the ancients, of the Greeks, of the Romans, and above all of the Germans; of the former kind is the superstition of modern times, the dregs of ecclesiastical christianity. The superstition of seamen is mostly genuine pagan, full of manly energy. The Nature in which they live is too great for their comprehension and their eye: they gaze in astonishment at her wonders, and endeavour to copy them in their poetry of superstition. But, pious and superstitious as the inhabitants of Le Pollet may be, they never repeat the Lord's Prayer unless in case of emergency, and are a set of resolute fellows, who are not afraid to

rap out an oath even in the confessional, and to promise the priest, with a *Damne! mon père!* to give up cursing and swearing. An anecdote which is related of a Polletais characterises all his fellow-townsmen, whether the circumstance actually occurred or not.

A fisherman of Pollet, after an illness, went to church to pray his Ave Maria, and to return thanks to Heaven for his recovery. A very large crucifix was hung up in the church. The chain with which it was fastened gave way, and the wooden image of the Redeemer broke the fisherman's arm, so that he was again brought to death's door. The priest came to him to prepare him for the journey to the other world, and, at the end of the ceremonies, held a crucifix to him to kiss. The patient at first refused; but, at the persuasion of the priest, he at length complied. "Pour toi," said he, turning to the crucifix; "ze veux bien, ze ne l'en veux pas; mais pour ton grand coquin de frère, Dieu me damne si ze le bais jamais!"

Another story is not less characteristic. D'Aubigné, archbishop of Rouen, was dissatisfied with the minister of Pollet, who had been accused of some heresy or other. He therefore forbade all the curates of the parish to read mass at Pollet. The Polletais cared nothing about this, so long as their priest, whom they highly esteemed, could read mass himself. To put an end to the scandal, the archbishop at length came to Dieppe, and held a convocation in the church of St. Remy, to decide upon

the case of the heretical *curé*. The Polletais forced their way into the church, and dispersed the sacred conclave. The archbishop escaped by flight. But this was not enough for them. They resolved to take a more severe revenge for the attack on their beloved pastor, and so they posted themselves at the bridge which the archbishop would have to cross, intending to intercept him and to throw him into the sea. His eminence, however, not disposed to purchase canonisation, like St. Nepomuk, by a cold bath, made a circuit, and hastened out of the town by the opposite gate.

A good Catholic will no doubt make the sign of the cross over the piety of the Polletais. Such are they, however, at once devout, energetic, and independent.

The life of seamen is so full of adventures, which look as much like miracles as a son looks like his father, that it would be surprising if they did not believe in miracles. A sailor related to me one or two such adventures.

One day, the wind dashed one of the fishing smacks of Dieppe against the pier. The furious waves then seized the shattered boat, lifted her up, flung her over the pier, and engulphed her with all on board. Hundreds of spectators witnessed the distress and destruction of the vessel, which was recognised. Mothers and wives hastened to the spot, but the death-struggle was over. One of them, who had been married but a fortnight, and who had lost her husband by this catastrophe,

swooned, and was carried into the nearest house. It was some hours before she was able to return home. And, as she opened the door, lo! there sat her husband, warming his chilled limbs at the fire! The friends who accompanied her made the sign of the cross, but the young wife threw her arms about the neck of the supposed spectre, who answered her kisses with flesh and blood. The same wave which threw the vessel over the pier, hurled him from the deck upon it: there he lay for some time senseless, and did not recover himself till the crowd had dispersed. Next day, the old fishwomen declared that Notre Dame had picked him up out of the sea, and laid him down on the pier.

On another occasion, a fishing smack grounded on the beach off Dieppe. The tempestuous sea rocked her from side to side, and every fresh wave threatened to swallow her up. The crew betook themselves to the boat, but no sooner had they pushed off from the smack than they were capsized by the furious element, and all hands perished. Wave after wave broke over the stranded vessel, and it was several hours before the sea retired and left her dry. The officers of the customs keep a vigilant eye on such vessels, and prevent any one from going on board them, till they have been inspected by the proper authorities. The fisher-boys, nevertheless, seldom fail to collect about such wrecks; and that was the case on this occasion. They distinctly heard a moaning in the vessel, and scampered off, certain that it must be the devil himself. The

custom-house officers, however, went on board, and found two boys belonging to the vessel, whom the crew had not had time to take with them in the boat, stiff with wet and cold, but otherwise unhurt, in the hold.

Almost every seaman has met with extraordinary adventures of this kind, and hence we may account for his belief in that which he has not experienced, and which, after all, must appear scarcely more wonderful to him than the other. The supernatural, the mystical, here lies so near the truth, that it must be very difficult, at least for the untaught seaman, to discover the boundary between them.

Whenever a vessel returns from Newfoundland, a pilot leaves the harbour in his boat and sails to meet her. When he gets on board, the pilot must not speak to a creature excepting the captain, to whom he then relates every thing of interest as well to the crew in general as to each individual, that has occurred during the last four or five months. It is not till the pilot has left the ship that the captain acquaints his men with the news which he has communicated. He informs one of the death of his father or his bride, another of the birth of a son. What must be the feelings of the whole crew when they see the pilot-boat approaching! what must be their impatience while the pilot is closeted with the captain in his cabin! how the heart of each must throb, after the boat has left the ship, when the captain calls him, uncertain whether he shall hear

tidings of joy or grief!—all this may be more easily imagined than described. Such moments elevate the man, expand his heart, and impart that composure, which in the end makes him forget what storm is, but also the force to grasp and to elaborate the highest ideas. This is a school in which one becomes a poet, without wishing to be or knowing that one is so.

The old and interesting traditions of the sailors and fishermen are gradually disappearing, along with their characteristic costume. Civilisation — mischievous civilisation — threatens to revolutionise Pollet itself. It cost me no little trouble, and I was obliged to have recourse to former travellers, to discover any traces of these old traditions.

On All Souls' day, *le jour des morts*, the seaman calls to mind all those who, during the past year, have perished in the conflict with the other element. There are few who have not to mourn a father, a brother, a son, or a friend. What wonder that on this day the imagination should be more lively and more active! Year after year, on All Souls' day—so old folks at Pollet still relate—a sail was discerned about midnight in the distance, and it seemed to be wafted by a stiff breeze towards the port of Dieppe. But presently it was seen hanging loosely about the mast, and the ship, nevertheless, approached nearer and nearer. The people on shore could at length distinguish that she was a vessel which had been missing for some time and given up for lost. She came nearer still, and now the crew

could be discerned. And the mother saw the son whose loss she had bemoaned for months, and the daughter the father, the sister the brother, and the widow her husband. All hastened to the spot to hail their joyful return. The crew, meanwhile, stood silent and motionless. Nobody was surprised at this, for very often, in imminent danger, the sailors make a vow not to speak till they have returned thanks to Notre Dame and to Heaven for their deliverance. A cable was thrown to the ship from the pier, for the purpose of drawing her into the harbour. Men and women laid hold of it, as they may be daily seen to do in Dieppe, to haul the vessel into port; but, tug as they would, they could not move her from the spot. At length, the church clock struck one, and the ship vanished, with all on board.

Another popular tradition, perhaps more ancient than the preceding, and owing its origin to the times of the Druid or German paganism, is connected with the same idea that called forth the story of All Souls' day. About midnight a carriage was heard rolling through the streets of Pollet, and the relations heard the voices of those who had died in the course of the past year. White dogs ran before the vehicle, which was drawn by a team of eight white horses, and in it stood or sat the deceased in their winding-sheets. But very few have seen this nocturnal apparition; for whoever sees it is sure to die before a year's end, on which account all who hear it make haste to close their windows.

It is less difficult to guess the origin and object of the following story:—One night, after a tremendous storm, the sexton of Notre Dame de Gervais, in l'ollet, was awakened by the ringing of the mass-bell. He jumped out of bed, conceiving that he had overslept himself, and that the priest had employed another person to ring. On entering the church, he saw the priest already at the altar, and a great number of fishermen assembled in silent devotion. Here knelt Jean, who had left the port half a year before and not returned; there Paul, whose body, cast up by the sea, the sexton had himself assisted to bury. Overcome with horror, he could neither speak not stir from the spot. At length the priest was proceeding to communicate, but could not. The host dropped from his hand, and his shriek of anguish was re-echoed by all present. At length the priest turned to the sexton and said to him: "Master Pierre, my poor Pierre, don't you know me again—Regnauld, whose ship struck on Easter Monday upon the rock of Ailly and perished? I vowed to have a mass performed for Notre Dame, and I forgot my vow. I would have now said this mass myself, in order to fulfil my vow; but when I attempt to communicate, I feel all hell in my throat, I am on fire, master Pierre. Tell my son never to forget the masses that he promises to Notre Dame."

Such stories produced their effect; and even at the present day we see occasionally, though but rarely, the whole crew of a ship, which has outlived

a tempest, going on pilgrimage barefoot and in their shirts to some celebrated chapel in fulfilment of a vow. A vow of this kind made in a storm has—hundreds are ready to attest it—the immediate effect of doubling the crew. "Le navire est doublé," is the exclamation by which the crew, in the last emergency, are excited to renewed exertions, and this cry alone has saved many a vessel. Faith can remove mountains, and why should it not have the effect of increasing the number of a ship's crew! If but one father is preserved by it for his children, who will dare to smile scornfully at it!

The girls of Pollet have a superstitious notion of a different kind. These seek upon the beach a white stone of a particular shape, which they call *la pierre du bonheur*, and to which they ascribe the power of conferring prosperity, delivering them from danger, and bringing them in due time a good husband. How many thousand years old this practice is the gods of Gaul might perhaps be able to tell. It would not be very difficult to guess why the fishermen consider a cat as the devil, and are struck with horror when they find one on board their vessels; but it would be harder to explain why they should feel a similar horror at the mention of the name of a priest, and imagine that it brings them ill luck. In vain have I sought the grounds of this notion, and must therefore content myself with stating the fact.

The number thirteen is unlucky here, as in every

part of Normandy. It is also unlucky to overturn a salt-cellar, to lay a knife and fork across, to set a loaf on the table upside down; but whoever sits under a beam at an entertainment is sure to be the next who will be married. To discover the causes of all these whims of superstition would be a difficult task. Give the devil, like a woman, but a finger, and he will presently take the whole hand and all the rest. But enough on this subject. I am almost afraid that this register of superstition might lead the reader to suppose that the honest fishermen are, after all, very little better than those who are intimidated with a paternoster, or who conceive that in repeating that prayer they have done enough for a suffering fellow-creature. I will relate the history of one of them, which will serve to teach us better.

In the night of the 31st of August, 1777, in a most tremendous storm, a vessel attempted to run into the harbour of Dieppe. Boussard, the pilot, who was never missing when the tempest raged, was on the pier, and seeing that the captain of the ship made several false manœuvres, he called to him with his speaking trumpet, directing him what to do, and strove by gestures to render himself intelligible. Owing to the storm and the darkness, his efforts proved unavailing, and the ship struck about thirty fathoms above the pier. Every body, excepting Boussard, gave up the crew for lost. Determined to save them, he was going to tie a rope round his body, in order to carry it to the

ship; but his wife and children and his friends surrounded and besought him by all that was sacred not to rush uselessly into certain destruction. Boussard, listening only to the voice of humanity, reproached his friends with their cowardice, and at length prevailed upon them to take home his wife and children. Having tied one end of the rope round him and fastened the other to the pier, he plunged into the sea. Twenty times did the waves hurl him back upon the beach, and as often did he plunge again into the raging billows. A fresh wave flung him towards the ship, and he disappeared beneath her. A general cry of horror proclaimed his destruction. But he had only dived to lay hold of a sailor whom the sea had swept from the deck, and whom he contrived to take senseless to the shore. A last attempt to reach the ship proved successful; he climbed her side, and conveyed to the crew the rope by which they were drawn ashore one after another.

But Boussard had not yet finished his glorious work. Exhausted with his exertions, he was conducted by his friends to the nearest house, where he brought up the sea-water that he had swallowed. A gust of wind wafted to the shore the cry of a passenger who had been left behind, and Boussard soon learned that there was another fellow-creature to save. He felt his strength renewed, and, before those about him were aware, he had rushed out of the house, plunged again into the sea, and was battling with the same difficulties which he had

before encountered, and which he overcame with the like success. The passenger was saved. Eight out of ten persons owed their lives to his courageous exertions. Louis XVI. made him a present of a thousand francs, and settled on him a pension of three hundred. He was appointed keeper of the pier lighthouse—an office which has ever since been held by the Boussards, descending from father to son: and not a year has passed unmarked by deeds worthy of the first possessor. Close to the parapet of the pier of Dieppe is a pole covered with copper, to which is fastened a chain. Here, in every storm since 1777, whether in the night or the day, a Boussard has taken his station, clinging to the chain, and served as a warning voice to those whom danger and the tempestuous sea pursued into the harbour. And though the waves broke over him, though they washed him from his post of honour, rising from their bosom he would again give advice with his speaking trumpet, in defiance of the sea and all its efforts. Fifty times has a Boussard risked his life to save the lives of others. Napoleon ordered a house to be built for him close to the spot where the first Boussard performed his heroic achievement. He gave him the cross of honour, and not a marshal of them all is more worthy of the distinction, even though he assisted in gaining the battles of Austerlitz and Jena. For more than half a century, whenever there has been a vessel or a fellow-creature to save, the people have asked: "Have we no Boussard here?"

When we have crossed the little bridge of the harbour of Dieppe, and find ourselves in a moment in a totally strange country, among people having other manners, other customs, and even another language, we naturally ask, whence this difference? Literary men have asked the same question, and attempted to solve it. One of these, Vitet, in his History of Dieppe, reveals the secret to his readers. Pollet, he says, comes from Poletto, the little compass, indicating the pole. The word points to Italy: the old costumes of the fishermen likewise remind us of Italy or Spain. Then again the pronunciation of the Polletais is very soft, and j in particular is always turned into z. Such are the grounds which induced M. Vitet to consider the Polletais as descended from Italians generally and Venetians in particular. He has overlooked the circumstance that one of the streets is even called Rue de la Lombarderie. This would have been an additional reason. I hope the reader will duly appreciate my generosity in supplying an adversary with arms before I attack him.

In my opinion, all these striking arguments prove very little or nothing. I believe, moreover, that the great majority of the fishermen and inhabitants of the coast of Normandy are of German origin. The proof deduced from the word Pollet I could very easily drive out of the field, or at least counterbalance by another etymology, were I to maintain that Pollet is derived from the North German *Pohl*—pole; and that Pollet is actually

situated upon a tract gained from the sea, upon which houses and hovels could not be built till poles or piles had been driven into the ground. As for the costume, that is Dutch full as much as Italian. If we would deduce with any degree of certainty the origin of the Polletais, there is a very simple way of doing so. The study of their language and manners, and of the popular dialect in particular, must necessarily show in words and turns whence they come, whether from the south or from the north. What I know about these I have picked up running, as it were; but to me it appears that all I have yet mentioned bears a northern much more than a southern stamp. The traditions concerning the carriage and the ship of the dead belong, as the French would say, to the *fogs* of the Germanic regions. Another story, which the old dames of Pollet relate to their grandchildren, is as follows. One day, a great number of children were playing on the beach, when a little, very little man, *le petit homme rouge*, passed by, and the children began to make game of him. The little man was angry, and picked up stones, and threw them at the urchins. And the stones showered down upon them as if flung by a hundred hands, and drove them away in a great fright, but without doing them any harm. So the children got into a fishing-boat, but the little man followed and kept pelting away till they were forced to go below and hide themselves. But there they could distinctly hear the stones rattling upon the deck over their heads

for a full hour, so that they imagined that the whole ship would be covered and themselves buried under them. At last all was quiet. They ventured to peep, and behold, the little man and all the stones were gone; they saw not one left upon the deck. It cannot be doubted that this little man was a dwarf, a mountain-sprite, a near kinsman of the German Rübezahl's, and, as every body knows, these dwarfs were the mischievous offspring of northern imagination.

One day, two fishermen were going inland from Pollet. On reaching the top of the hill, they saw a little boy sitting by the road-side, and asked him what he was doing there. "I am resting," was the answer, "and shall then walk to Berneville," which is a league from Pollet. "Well, then," replied the fishermen, "you can go along with us, for that is our way too." As they went along, the boy contrived to amuse the fishermen with a hundred merry pranks, so that they were quite delighted with him. By and by, they came to the pond near Berneville. Here the boy laid hold of one of the fishermen, lifted him up like a shuttlecock, and threw him over the pond. He alighted unhurt on the other side. "You may bless your stars," said the boy, "that you sprinkled yourself with holy water this morning, otherwise you must infallibly have fallen into the pond."—The holy water is an addition of modern times: the dwarf and his tricks point again to the north.

Of the dialect of the Polletais I have not been

able to catch much, as they have borrowed from their neighbours a great many expressions in the language of common life, and my brief stay did not permit me to enter into long investigations. I only recollect once hearing a person, when speaking of the poppy, in French *pavot*, call it *mahon*, in German *Mohn*. Lastly, a practice which is likewise German, that of husbands buying, as it were, their wives of their parents, has not been entirely relinquished here, or at least it still lives in the memory of all.

These, however, are mere conjectures. They cannot acquire the force of proofs, unless verified by arguments deduced from language, manners, and customs. Any really national peculiarity, however trivial it may seem, is of the utmost importance in regard to the history of the people. The earth has been turned up, in order to find a coin, a ruin, and then to dispute most pertinaciously about their import, and to write books on the subject. Men have puzzled their brains to make out the meaning of a few signs and ciphers inscribed by a playful fancy upon an amulet. But very rarely has any one conceived the idea that every popular custom, every peculiar word of a national dialect, every usage, and every tradition, bears a stamp far more characteristic and more easy to decipher than any of the coins of the Upper or Lower Empire, which it has cost hundreds of thousands to dig out of their rubbish. I have nothing to say against that, for the whim gives bread to many

honest labourers: only it were to be wished that others would take the trouble to make inquiries where such inquiries might be productive of gain. Every people, every tribe, every village, is its own history, if one consults and has the skill to unravel its language, manners, customs, and traditions. In France, the revolution has swept away many of the peculiarities which previously subsisted among the people; and, unless some acute observer shall soon arise to collect such traces of them as still remain, perhaps in ten or twenty years it may be totally impossible to find any: for even Pollet, which for centuries contrived to keep itself an alien to Dieppe, is daily losing more and more of its peculiar character; and the language, customs, and usages, by which it was once distinguished, are fast wearing away. To work then, ye historical inquirers: fling overboard the lumber of erudition, and study in real life the life of the people and its history: that is the true, the purest source.

CHAPTER XV.

Environs of Dieppe—Cité des Limes, an ancient Fortification attributed to the Belgic Gauls — M. Feret, librarian of Dieppe and his Researches—Popular Traditions current in the environs —Popular Festivals—Arques—Victory gained there over the Leaguers by Henry IV. — A Beggar Family — Varengeville — Manoir d'Ango—History of Jean Ango—Church of Varengeville; legend concerning it.

CHANCE has at times given me some smart slaps, but it has never failed afterwards to stroke the cheek that yet tingled from the last blow. I have in consequence arrived at so truly Christian a philosophy as patiently to hold forth the right cheek when I have been smitten on the left. At Dieppe again I had at first the luck of being unfortunate: all the strangers who had visited the town for the sake of sea-bathing were gone. That circumstance of itself would have been a subject of regret; but as these guests had left the place on the first of October, the public library had been closed on the same day, and this grieved me much, for, though I am by no means a bookworm, yet I hoped to have there found information on this or the other point. I resolved, therefore, at once to call on the librarian and to arrange the matter with him; and lucky it was that

I did so. M. Feret, librarian of Dieppe, is incontestably one of those men who have studied the history of their country with most industry and success. He offered immediately to accompany me to the library, where we stayed a considerable time; and I had occasion to congratulate myself on the disappointment which had forced me to make his personal acquaintance. He coincided in my notions of the importance of popular customs, traditions, and dialect. He shewed me in the library several Roman and Gallic antiquities, mostly dug up in the Cité des Limes; and when I mentioned my intention of inspecting this historical riddle, Feret offered to accompany me thither on the following day. A better guide and cicerone one could not well have, for he has made a particular study of this ancient fortification, and endeavoured by researches on the spot to ascertain something of its history.

Half a league from Dieppe, on the top of the cliff, you come to a dike or rampart of earth, thrown up in a semicircle of about two thousand yards, and having a ditch at its foot; whence there can be no doubt that this place was fortified at some remote period by the hand of man. This wall and ditch on the land side, and the cliff about sixty yards in height towards the sea, defended those who were within the enclosure from any sudden surprise. Places fortified by walls and ditches are in general not very remarkable; they are to be found every where, and belonging to all the periods of history;

but these seem to be the work of a gigantic race. Such at least is the impression produced upon the mind by the wall, in many places more than sixty feet high, and by the extent of the fortification, capable of containing an army of several hundred thousand men. I am not aware that there exists in Europe another historical monument of the kind on so large a scale.

Within the fortification you perceive, especially along the wall, several hollows, all of them nearly in the form of a blunt half-moon. Researches in some of these have convinced Feret that they were in ancient times the sites of habitations. There were found in them pieces of Gallic urns, ashes, and bones, burned and unburned, also stone axes, finished and unfinished, and some coins of the period antecedent to the conquest of Gaul by the Romans. Among the bones dug up were several which are supposed not to belong to any of the animal species now known in Europe.

In the left half of the enclosure was found a series of hillocks, which, on examination, proved to be barrows, or burial-places; on one side of these graves was discovered a channel, also in the form of a half-moon, constructed of stones laid one upon another; and Feret is of opinion that it served to admit a current of air to the spot where the dead, whose ashes have been found, were burned. Lastly, on digging about the middle of the wall, near the margin of the cliff, there were discovered the ruins of a Roman building, and in it bones and sculls,

likewise Roman vases, glass rings, hair-pins, and coins of the emperors.

Who constructed this gigantic work? is a question which naturally occurs to every mind, and there the dispute commences. There is not one of the races that, so far as the records of history extend, ever set foot in Normandy, to which it has not been attributed. The English, the Normans, Charlemagne, the Romans, the Gauls, the Saxons, the Belgians, have all had their advocates. The two hypotheses which have maintained their ground to the present day are, firstly that of Feret, which represents the Cité des Limes as a Belgo-Gallic *oppidum*, whither, according to Cæsar, the Gauls, having dispersed, retired on the approach of an enemy, with wives, children, and effects; and secondly, that of another investigator, M. Fallue, who considers it as a Roman-Gallic work, and connects it with other similar fortifications, though on a smaller scale, in Normandy, which, according to him, were constructed to protect the country against the attacks of the northern Germans, and especially the Saxons. Both hypotheses are supported by a great display of erudition, which struck terror into a poor lounger like myself, when I ventured to turn over the books in which they are propounded; but I must confess that I am rather disposed to coincide in the notions of Feret.

One remark, however, I will venture to subjoin. I have read here and there descriptions of the American antiquities left by a civilization of which no

other traces exist, and I was strongly reminded of the latter. These gigantic walls, enclosing a tract of some miles, capable of harbouring the population of a district two hundred miles in circumference, defying the revolutions of ages, of nations, nay of the earth itself, seem, like those American ruins, to indicate an extinct civilization. Among the coins that have been found there is one on which is a head decorated with feathers in the manner customary with the savages of America — a circumstance that served still more to remind me of those mute witnesses of by-gone times in another hemisphere.

Upon the whole, I am no friend of ruins and monuments whose language we no longer understand; but it is impossible to pass the Cité des Limes without pausing in astonishment and admiration. If these walls could speak, if one of the sleepers in those graves could rise and relate to us what has happened during his slumber of thousands of years, the whole phalanx of the literati would fall upon him and kill him outright, because he had disturbed their dreams and spoiled their sport, which, by the by, no dead dreamer has a right to do.

In going and returning, Feret related much that was interesting to me. When he first commenced his researches here, the wise in their own conceit set him down for a fool, who was throwing away his own money and that of his friends; for a society had been formed at Dieppe to defray the expense of the excavations. Presently, the antiquities which had been discovered began to be talked of, and then

these wise men plumply declared that Feret was a sly fellow, who buried over night what he dug up in the morning. At length the labourers found a skeleton in the ruins of the Roman habitations; and in two days the whole town and the surrounding country were talking of the discovery, and it was universally reported that a general, with two crosses of honour about his neck, had been dug up in Cæsar's camp, as the Cité des Limes is called by the common people. The good folks probably thought that they could not do too much honour to one who for nearly two thousand years had been an inmate of Cæsar's camp, nay, who might even have been himself a Cæsar. The anecdote is characteristic enough of Dieppe and its environs.

The Cité des Limes has other wonders besides this general and his decorations. It was natural that these gigantic works should operate upon the imagination of a poetic people. Animating them in its own way, it gave birth to the following story:—In clear, moonshiny nights, about the time of the full moon in September, the passenger coming from Dieppe sees a great number of young females of exquisite beauty, standing around a table, on which are spread wares, apparel, and trinkets of all sorts. When any one approaches the table to look at the commodities, the beautiful damsels presently surround him, joking and toying with him, till at length they so completely entangle him in the net of their charms, that he follows them involuntarily to the edge of the cliff, where, amidst acclamations and

scornful laughter, they tumble him headlong into the sea.

Who knows but this tradition may have as high historical import as those remains of the ancient Cité des Limes, dug up on its site? Perhaps there once dwelt in them a conquering race, which, having attained a higher point of cultivation than the conquered, offered for sale to the latter the productions of its luxury at a fair held there some time in September; whereupon the elders and the priests of the vanquished strove to secure their youth from the influence of the new civilisation by this tale. All popular traditions owe their origin to some circumstance or other, and it would be worth while to study them from this point of view: the skeleton most assuredly belongs in general to history; the imagination of the people has created merely the form in which it is clothed.

In a village situated on the opposite side of Dieppe, on the road to Caudebec, a tradition has been current from time immemorial, that females covered with white veils are to be seen at night on a certain spot, and researches on that spot have proved that it was a burial place during the Roman sway in Gaul. This tradition, then, has outlived the Franks, the Normans, the English, and the French: for it must assuredly have originated at the time when the cemetery, as such, still worked upon the imagination of the people. In another village, situated on the left bank of the river Dieppe, the credulous frequently saw horsemen in

white scampering over the fields, and turning up the ground with their lances. Tradition added, that in ancient times these horsemen had been defeated by other horsemen in red, and that the former came to look for their slain comrades. There can be no doubt that a battle was once fought here. Perhaps the tradition refers back to the time of the Romans, for it is well known that the Roman cavalry wore white mantles. Who were the horsemen in red it would be more difficult to decide.

The traditions on the left side of the Dieppe are more Roman, those on the right more German, in their nature. The river was probably the boundary between the old German Belgians and the Gauls properly so called. Another tradition, which still survives among the people on this side of the river, reminds us of the high respect in which matrimony was held by the Germans. According to this tradition, old maids were doomed after death to draw an iron harrow in hell. But the names of a great number of villages point still more decidedly than these traditions to the Germans, the Germano-Belgians, or the Saxons, who once dwelt in these parts. Thus Saqueville is in Latin Villa Saxonis, and Anglisqueville must derive its name from the Angles.

In regard to the popular festivals, the river forms again a decided boundary between the inhabitants of the two banks. The feast of Epiphany, Twelfth-day, is held throughout all Normandy, as far as Dieppe. Farther eastward, towards Picardy,

on the other hand, this day is not a popular, but only a church festival. The children here celebrate the festival of St. Nicholas in its stead. In the environs of Dieppe, indeed, it is not the day on which presents are made to children, as throughout all Belgium and along the Rhine, but merely a day of amusement for them, when they go about with paper lanterns of various colours fastened to the ends of long sticks. In Eu, on the contrary, it is on this day that presents are made to children. In the immediate environs of Dieppe, as well as farther inland towards the Seine, children have presents made them on Mid-lent Sunday. On that day they put a wooden shoe in the fireplace, and Micarême, whom they figure to themselves as a kind of fairy, drops the gifts into it. This wooden shoe is also met with along the Rhine at the festival of St. Nicholas.

To me this gradual blending of the feast of St. Nicholas with another seems not wholly unimportant to the historical inquirer. It is well-known that the first Christian priests adopted as much as possible of the ceremonies, at least, of Paganism. That the feast of St. Nicholas may be a holiday for children, even without its presents, is not doubtful in the environs of Dieppe; but without them it has a totally different character from that which it presents in the whole of ancient Belgium, as far as the Rhine, where it still exists. The inference that this was a festival for children before the time of St. Nicholas and his gifts seems

to me not too bold. If it was a Pagan festival of the ancient Germano-Belgians, its confinement between the Rhine and the Seine, which otherwise could not be easily accounted for, is perfectly natural. But enough of this. I merely wished to show, by one example, the historical importance of such trifles, as most historians might deem them, in order to justify my partiality for such speculations.

I was present that same evening at an historical discussion, which took place at my quarters in Dieppe. One of my fellow-lodgers, for the time being, had been making an excursion with his wife to Arques: he returned full of all that he had seen, and began to overflow as soon as he saw the landlord. He could not find terms strong enough to express how interesting his visit to Arques had proved. He had minutely explored the field of battle.

"Every traveller that comes to our town," said our host, "thinks like you; and there is not one but treats himself to a sight of Arques."

"It is, indeed, a most interesting place."

"If one did but know," resumed the landlord, "who it was that fought there."

"Why, Henry IV. to be sure—every body knows that."

"Right! every body does know that; but with whom did he fight?—that is the secret: some say with the Flemings and the Belgians, others even talk of the English; but I rather think it was the Gauls, from whom we are all descended."

The stranger looked with some surprise at our learned host, and then very calmly replied: "You are wrong, sir. Henry IV. defeated the *Ligue* (League) at Arques."

"Ah! yes, the *ligne* (line), against which he sent the *cavalry*, as the little corporal always used to do."

With these two technical terms mine host had got upon a field with which he was well acquainted. He had been an hussar under Napoleon, and served in Spain; the two words, *line* and *cavalry*, had touched the most sonorous chords of his heart, and long did they continue to vibrate. I have no mind to leave Normandy, and to transport myself along with him to Spain. At any rate, this conversation proves what fruit Feret's researches have produced among the people; for there can be no doubt that the sceptical erudition of our soldier-landlord had merely confounded two places — the field of battle of Arques and the Cité des Limes—in order to send out Henry IV. against the Belgo-Gauls.

This learned discussion helped to confirm me in my resolution to go the next day to Arques. One of the most beautiful walks to be found far and near leads to this place. At setting out, you proceed for some distance over the middle of the hill, on the left of Dieppe, and enjoy a delicious view of the valley, the town, the harbour, and the sea. You then come to an alley of lofty trees, whose boughs form living arcades over your head. At length the

village, with its church, and near it the ruins of the castle, appear before you.

The castle, seated on a solitary elevation, commands picturesque views on all sides. It was built by William count de Talou, uncle of William the Bastard. It was taken by Philip Augustus, but restored to Richard Cœur de Lion by the peace of 1196. In later times it was alternately in the possession of the French and English, till it was finally taken by the former under Charles VII. Henry IV. cannonaded the army of the League from this castle. This once celebrated structure is now a ruin, and is daily falling more and more to decay. In 1780 an ordinance was issued, permitting the inhabitants of Arques to employ the then remaining materials of the castle for useful buildings. The palace was pulled down for the purpose of building huts. Those mills in the valley, those farm-houses, those barns, that cot which belongs to a day-labourer, have been built with the stones of the proud castle. I have not read any book relating to Dieppe and its environs but what laments the Vandalism of the age, which presumes to lay hands on the fallen ruins of such a castle and to convert them into mean buildings. Spare your tears, ye sentimental antiquaries, for a better occasion, and consider what tears of blood were mingled with the mortar which cemented the stones of the castle of Arques!

Arques was a town so early as the ninth century, and in the eleventh it was one of the most important

places in Normandy. Dieppe has acted the same part towards it, as in later times Havre has done towards Harfleur. Arques is now an inconsiderable village, interesting only on account of its beautiful and romantic environs and its historical recollections. I shall advert to one of them only. Arques witnessed the first decisive victory won by Henry IV. over the League, after his accession to the crown, in 1589. From the castle you overlook the whole field of battle, and to the tactician it may be a great treat to study there the movements of the two armies; I do not grudge it him. Somewhat more or less fog, and the great king might have died a little one. But perhaps not: Henry IV. was the expression of a want of the times. It was decreed that royalty, then supported by the people, should annihilate the noblesse, and set itself up in the place of the latter. Hence it was that Henry conquered the League; the crop was ripe, no matter what was the name of the reaper. With Henry IV., for whom preceding monarchs had done much to clear the way, absolute monarchy in France gained the final victory over the nobility: and under Louis XIV. it attained its highest elevation, to begin rolling down the hill on the other side, crushing all that should strive to stop its descent.

How Henry acquired the name of Father of the People it is now-a-days not difficult to say. He annihilated the last vestiges of popular liberty, he intrigued with every woman, and he squandered the treasures of the nation. But all this is sooner

forgotten than a hearty shake of the hand given by a king to an humble citizen. What may be effected by such means is now no secret. He walked about in the streets of Paris and talked with the shopkeepers; he once went into the cottage of a peasant, and sat down to table with him. This was the way in which he acquired popularity, and became the Father of the People. History, whose eyes are frequently not opened till long after the events which it records, is gradually doing justice to this monarch; but this merit it will not deny him, that on many occasions he displayed a truly chivalrous spirit, as at Arques, where, when one of his wings was beaten, he rushed almost alone among the enemy, exclaiming: "Is there not one brave fellow who will follow his king?"

In the army of the League, as well as in that of the king, there were bands of German mercenaries called Landsknechts. Those of the League went over to the royalists at the beginning of the battle, and afterwards, when it became general, they fell upon their own countrymen and the king's troops. Owing to them, victory seemed for a time to incline to the Leaguers; but when, in spite of their treachery, the royalists prevailed, they were slaughtered without mercy. What nation has not produced traitors!—but there is none to share with the Germans—for the Flemings and the Swiss are of German origin—the disgrace of having produced Landsknechts. Not a battle was fought in which the French did not bear a part; but they were

always volunteers, and scarcely ever chaffered away their blood and their lives for money. The worst of it is that the race of the Landsknechts does not yet seem to be yet extinct; for it frequently appeared to me as if I saw them in Napoleon's battles twenty or thirty years ago. When we consider how readily these Landsknechts lent a hand, as soon as their hire was dropped into it, in the oppression of the people, we shall be sensible that the Germans have a stain upon their national character, which time and change of conduct alone can wipe away.

I had resolved to go on from Arques to Varengeville. I wished to see how the residence of a citizen of Dieppe looked in its ruins after that of a sovereign of the country. The road, leading up and down hill, was rather fatiguing. To make amends, however, I had frequently the finest views, sometimes of Dieppe and the sea, at others of the charming environs of the town. I passed through Appeville, where the Scie forms a wild and deep valley. From Appeville my road led past the wood of Hautot. Here, under a lofty tree, I found a beggar family, man, woman, and several children, seated at their dinner. Having frequently witnessed such scenes, I had occasionally made inquiries, and learned the following particulars concerning this class of vagrants. In the whole of Upper Normandy there are great numbers of persons who live entirely upon the charity of the peasants, and by stealing fruit, poultry, eggs, &c. This condition is hereditary, as the dignity of peer formerly was.

It is not charity alone—for fear contributes its share—that bestows food and shelter on these colonies of itinerant beggars. In every solitary farm-yard of Upper Normandy there is a place which stands open night and day for the reception of these mendicants. This kind of lodging is legalised, as it were, for the farmer demands of them their travelling book—how they came by such a book I know not, as in other parts of the continent it is given to travelling artisans only—and keeps it till the next morning, lest they should rob him in the night. Shelter is never refused, as such a refusal would expose the farm-buildings to the risk of being burned down. A piece of bread they obtain at every house; but it would be too dry to eat without butter or meat, and a fowl in the pot was promised by Henry IV. to all Frenchmen. Accordingly, the beggars fish for fowls with hooks, which they bait with a bit of the bread given to them by the owner of the said fowls. At the appointed hour, the whole family meet in a wood, and there feast upon their prize.

At Dieppe, I was told that these happy mortals, who are strangers to care, living without law, being either above or below it, contract marriages in their own way. The beggar-lad seeks himself a lass of his own caste, and merely asks her if she is willing to be his helpmate. If she consents, the business is settled, and they proceed to the solemn ceremony of marriage. A fowl, the produce of their fishery, is put into an earthen pot and boiled.

As soon as it is done, the bridegroom takes up his stick and strikes the pot with it. The marriage is valid for so many years as there are pieces. I cannot vouch for it that this practice really prevails; but as a report, it serves to characterise these colonies of vagrants, for it shows, at least, what the people think of them.

It would be very difficult to determine the origin of these Norman gipsies, and to decide whether they are descendants of a subdued race, which preferred the freedom of the beggar to the law of the conqueror; for, even though they may themselves have old traditions, it is almost impossible to get any information from these people. I am not aware that any writer has yet mentioned these Norman beggar-colonies.

It was with such recollections that I arrived at the village of Varengeville, composed of a number of very handsome farm-houses. Whether Ango's residence in the village may have contributed to its flourishing appearance I know not, but I am inclined to believe so, for most Norman villages wear a very different aspect. Near it is situated the chateau or *manoir* of Ango.

Jean Ango was contemporary with Francis I. He was the Jacques Cœur of his age. The son of an opulent father, he contrived to amass immense wealth. His ships navigated every sea; he lent money and even a fleet to his sovereign; and when a foreign monarch, the king of Portugal, had offended him by taking one of his vessels, he equipped

a squadron, which destroyed and plundered several towns and villages in the environs of Lisbon, and filled the capital itself with consternation. The king of Portugal conceived that a sovereign only durst act thus, and, on learning that the fleet was French, he sent to Francis I. to demand an explanation of such a procedure in time of peace. Francis referred the messenger to Ango, intimating that his master was at war with him only, and that of course with him he had to make his peace. Ango received the envoy with the utmost magnificence, and recalled his fleet. Even in those days, it was deemed prudent to elevate men capable of lending to a king above the ranks of the *bourgeoisie*, and so Ango was created count and appointed governor of Dieppe. But what he had acquired as burgher he was doomed to lose as count. Ango grew vain, and squandered prodigious sums to gratify his vanity: he grew proud, and treated those who had assisted him to amass wealth as though he had been born a count. In this manner he estranged from him the citizens of Dieppe; and when, having involved himself in embarrassments by his foolish extravagance, he was forced to be their debtor, the storm burst and overthrew the edifice of his grandeur. The man who had seen kings humbled before him was destined, towards the close of life, to deplore in solitude the ruin of his fortune.

The Manoir d'Ango bears to this day traces of the former magnificence of its founder. Though the hand of Time has made havoc with it, there are

still to be seen arcades and pillars, which attest the luxury and the art employed in the construction of this edifice. Two medallions carved in stone, if they really are, as they are said to be, likenesses of Francis I. and Ango, attest his vanity also; while you are strongly reminded of his misfortunes by the circumstance that the proud structure is now a ruin, and the dwelling of a lowly husbandman.

From Ango's chateau, I went to the church of Varengeville. It is situated on the margin of the steep cliff. The church itself is not more remarkable than a thousand others; but its site, apart from the village, high above the sea, and looking down upon it and upon the rugged rocks which here form the coast, scooped into a semicircle several miles in extent, is peculiarly striking and solemn. Seating myself upon the wall surrounding the churchyard, I indulged for some time in the most delicious reveries.

"If that is true," I at last exclaimed, "then must the devil be a stupid devil, indeed!" A popular legend, which I had read, or picked up somewhere or other, had come into my head. Many hundred years ago, the village of Varengeville having considerably increased, its inhabitants resolved to build a church precisely in the centre of the place, that it might be handy for every body. So they fell to work; but what they did in the day the devil pulled down at night, and built up again on the spot where the church now stands. This continued for several days and nights, till the people

of Varengeville were tired out, and resolved to finish building where the devil had begun. Nor could they have played him a more scurvy trick. This devil was so simple as merely to calculate that the villagers would have a couple of hundred paces further to go to church, without considering that sublime Nature would there preach them such a sermon as could not fail to make an impression on the most obdurate heart. Had the celebrated Eulenspiegel then been the devil's clerk of the works, he could not have obeyed more literally the injunction to take care to let all the churches be placed as far as possible from their respective villages.

The sun was fast declining. Gladly would I have tarried to witness his setting, but I had still two good leagues to walk to Dieppe. To wish me a good night's rest, would have been a work of supererogation: nor did the devil, to whom I had told such home truths, disturb my slumbers by unpleasant dreams.

CHAPTER XVI.

Excursion to Eu—Conversation at a Bookseller's—Superstitious Notions — Belief in Were-wolves — The Market-place — The Church—Sculpture representing the Entombment of Christ—The Chateau—Collection of Portraits of the House of Bourbon —Historical Recollections of the Chateau—Treport—The Pier —St. Valeri — Fecamp — The Abbey Church — The Precieux Sang, and Legend respecting it — Pilgrimages made to Fecamp on account of it — Spring impregnated with it — Abbots of Fecamp — Wealth of the Abbey — Ruins of a Castle — Exploit of Bois-Rosé—The Casino.

THE Bresle, which runs through Eu, and discharges itself into the sea at Treport, forms the northern boundary of Normandy, which it separates from Picardy. A sort of diligence, or omnibus, runs daily from Dieppe to Eu, and an excursion thither is well worth the trouble.

We arrived about nine o'clock at Eu, and as I had left Dieppe fasting, my first care was to remedy this inconvenience. At three coffee-houses I inquired if I could have a *café au lait*, and it was not till I came to the third, and till the maid had consulted the daughter of the house, and the daughter the mother, that I received an affirmative answer. In the other two houses, the people alleged that

they served coffee only, and had nothing to do with milk. In the last, they did condescend to accommodate me, but I was obliged to pay as dearly for my breakfast as I should have done at the most fashionable coffee-house in the Palais royal itself.

After this preparation, I sallied forth on my exploratory travels. I stepped into a bookseller's shop, to see if I could meet with any publication concerning Eu and its environs. A very dry extract from the *Journal departemental de la France*, by M. Estrancelin, deputy of the department of the Somme, was the only thing that I could find; but the mistress of the shop was extremely communicative, and I had a long talk with her. She knew a great deal, but very little about Eu; and I really believe it was not her fault.

I led her, by degrees, to the subject of superstition, and she told me that it was more and more on the decline. During the time of the Empire, the belief in the old bugbears had become nearly extinct; the race of the *loups-garoux*, or were-wolves, had died off, and it was not till the Restoration that a few had again entered the country, though it was only one here and there who credited their existence. They might, she conceived, have followed the allied armies like the other wolves. In the years 15 and 16, several persons took a great deal of pains to bring them again into vogue. She then told me a frightful story about herself having, as she thought, been once attacked by a were-wolf, but, to her great relief, she soon discovered that it was only Hector, her neighbour's yard-dog.

It is likely enough that I listened to all this with a look of incredulity, for she kept adducing fresh arguments to prove that, in the first years of the Restoration, there actually were people who took infinite trouble to restore the were-wolves and other phantoms. She put into my hand a book entitled, "Relation concernant les Evènements qui sont arrivés à un Laboureur de la Reauste, dans les premiers mois de 1816," in which a man named Martin, of Gallardon, near Chartres, relates that the archangel Michael appeared to him, and directed him to go to the king and tell him that he must take care to have the Sunday kept more holy, that all his officers were heretics, that he ought to drive them to the devil, and then to fill their places with pious Christians.

On the appearance of this work, the prioress of Eu assembled all the godly maids and matrons of the town, and read passages out of it to them; and it was not long before the were-wolf was at his old pranks. But very few saw him in spirit and in truth. Ever since the Revolution of July, he has totally forsaken Eu: he is said to be afraid of the paving stones.

From the bookseller's I went to a young man in Eu, to whom I had a letter of recommendation, and he took me through the town, to the church, and to the castle.

Our way to the church led me through the market-place. I make a point, wherever I go, not to omit taking a peep at the market. A much greater noise prevailed at Eu than is generally found in the markets of Normandy; I could not help making this remark

to my companion. He replied that this was very natural, as a great number of those who attend the market are Picards, who are exceedingly talkative. He pointed out several groupes of them, and, after my attention had been called to the difference, I could readily distinguish the Normans from the Picards. The latter are mostly spare and slender, with rather long faces, and open countenances, which are frequently lit up by a passing smile. But then their tongues are incessantly going.

The Norman, on the contrary, is much shorter and more robust, has a *tête carrée*, as the French call it, says little, but thinks the more, as a piercing eye and an arch look very frequently tell you. It would be difficult, perhaps impossible, and indeed unnecessary, to efface these provincial distinctions. The Revolution has done quite enough, inasmuch as it has put an end to mutual antipathies and their causes, by abolishing all exclusive privileges and advantages enjoyed by certain provinces of France in preference to others.

My companion conducted me to the church, and there left me for a few minutes, having some urgent business to attend to. The church is large, without being grand. On one side is a sort of dark hall, where the interment of Christ is represented in sculptures. This struck me only because I had seen a similar chapel at Dieppe, and afterwards I found another of the kind at Fecamp. The chiaroscuro prevailing in the chapel, the stillness of the whole church, in which there was nobody but the

sexton and myself, and the tolling of the bell proclaiming the death of a fellow-creature, produced in my mind such a feeling of awe as I stood before the grave of Christ, that the stone figures seemed almost to be instinct with life.

My cicerone returned, and he had to seek me some time before he found me in the sepulchral chapel, absorbed in reverie. He looked at me with some surprise, and I dare say that, in his evening circle, he would have some witticism to launch at his devoutly sentimental companion. We went together into a subterraneous chapel, where there are half-a-dozen tombs of the counts of Eu. It was impossible for these to make any impression on me in the presence of my loquacious guide: he was not a Norman, but from Marseilles.

From the church we proceeded to the chateau. The exterior has some resemblance in miniature to the Tuileries. The roof and the numerous chimneys, at least, are imitations of that palace. Louis Philip, the restorer, or, more properly speaking, the builder of the chateau, might here indulge before 1830 in that long dream which at length was realised, without being disturbed by external phenomena. The interior of the chateau, though not on a large scale, is rich and handsome in its kind. The apartments would suit me better than those of any other palace, because they are smaller, and of course more comfortable. The windows command a very beautiful view of the country towards Treport and the sea.

The chief ornament of the chateau is one of the most complete collections of portraits of all the scions of the house of Bourbon, to which are added portraits of many other princes and celebrated men. The duchess of Orleans, wife of the murdered duke of Guise, commenced this collection. The Revolution expelled these pictures; but Louis Philip replaced them in their former situation, and completed the collection. There cannot be a better school for any one who wishes to study physiognomy. Lavater might have held lectures here. One of these pictures I should certainly not have introduced, had I been prince or king. I mean that of Margaret Maultasche, duchess of Firol. Never in my life did I see an uglier beggar or gipsy-woman It is not judicious to show the stupid vulgar that princes and princesses have not even the scurvy privilege of beauty, and that Nature makes us mortals, whether king or pauper, plain or handsome, just as she may be in the humour. The painters of the duchess of Berry were much more discreet in this respect. I have seldom seen a pair of finer eyes than those of her portrait, in the library at Dieppe. Time did not permit me to bestow due attention on the thousand and odd portraits of this army of princes. What a sum the entire collection must have cost!

The park is—but it would be useless to describe it, for these parks are all as like one another as brother and sister; and still more useless to employ such adjectives as beautiful, charming, picturesque,

and all the rest of them. I shall therefore merely say, the park is—a park. Enjoying from certain points magnificent views of the sea, you here find clumps of trees, there arbours, water, and lastly, a table, on which Louis Philip has had this inscription engraved: "C'est ici que les Guises tirent leur conseil au 16me siécle!" to commemorate the conspiracy of a prince against his sovereign.

The chateau is rich in historical recollections. The first dukes of Normandy occasionally resided in it. William the Conqueror here solemnized his marriage with Matilda of Flanders. Here he received Harold, the envoy of England, who afterwards contested the crown with him, after both princes had endeavoured to outwit one another at Eu; the one extorting an oath of fidelity, and the other overreaching him by means of that very oath.

The families of Lusignan, Brienne, Artois, Bourbon, Cleves, Lorraine, and Orleans, were successively proprietors of this castle. Louis XI., in his contest with the nobility, ordered it to be demolished, together with a great number of other castles. It was afterwards rebuilt, and we have seen that here the Guises held consultation, as Louis Philip says. It came into the possession of the house of Orleans in the 17th century. Its owner, prince Louis Joseph de Lorraine, contracted debts at a time when even nobles were obliged to pay them; his property was taken in execution, agreeably to a decision of the parliament of Paris in 1660 and 1662, and Eu was bought by Anna

Maria Louise of Orleans, who expended immense sums in its embellishment.

The Revolution turned the chateau into an hospital. The Restoration gave it back to Louis Philip, and he transferred it to his son, the duke of Orleans, in that well-known compact by which the provident father gave away all he had.

I am sorry that I have not at hand the work of Jules Janin, and all those charming feuilletons of the Journal des Debats, the Temps, and other papers, which celebrated the visit paid by the king to Eu five or six years ago. I would translate something from them, compose a melody to it, or adapt it to the tune of the Marseillaise. It is inconceivable what monkeys men make of themselves. Just touch the drum, put the pipes to your lips, and they fall a-capering immediately. But Jules Janin, with his antics, is the most diverting monkey there is among all the former lacqueys of the court. If he was mine, I would put on him a red jacket, and take him to all the chief cities and towns in the world, and exhibit him for the amusement of the good people of the said cities and towns.

But enough concerning Eu. I have yet to see Tréport, and must contrive to get back to Dieppe this evening.

Tréport is half a league distant from Eu. Before the Revolution there was an abbey at this place. The fishermen now are obliged to make shift without it; and the village seems to be no worse off on that account. As I intended to make

some stay at Etretat, another fishing village, I wished to see Treport, just *en passant*. It consists of a long line of houses near the harbour and on the hill. Half way up this hill stands a venerable-looking church, whence you have an exquisite view of magnificent Nature. Whether the devil had any hand in this or not I cannot tell.

The sturdy fishermen were busily engaged on the quays, some in unloading their boats, others in preparing for sea. The women, mostly short but well made, with full bosoms and healthy-looking, expressive faces, were carrying heavy loads of salt, which the men took on board, for curing the fish caught while out at sea. The inhabitants of the village in general, even the ordinary fishermen, are in good circumstances. Every family has its own house, or at least a share in the house which it inhabits. The sea supplies them with sustenance, and, owing to the activity of the men, the industry, sobriety, and economy of the women, there is scarcely a family but has laid by something at the year's end. Not one of those greedy-looking visages that one sees wherever merchant-vessels come, is to be met with here; every face, male and female, bears the stamp of honesty and goodnature.

I went upon the little pier to rest myself for a moment. There some hearty boys were playing with round pebbles, so that the sea, the provident mother of these people, supplies even the children with playthings. It is easy to discover in the boy the daring seaman of future years. Beside me sat

two gray-headed invalid sailors, who repaired thither to see the vessels come in and go out, and to ascertain the direction of the wind. I had been chatting for a while with the younger of these veterans, before the elder joined us. As he approached, the other said, with a sort of respect: "Voila le veteran de Treport!" The speaker, his junior by three years, was eighty-five. Both had served during the war, and the elder carried his crippled arm in a sling. I asked them various questions, but they could only half understand me. When I inquired concerning the customs of the fishermen, they began to tell me about their campaigns; and when I asked them to relate some of their remarkable adventures, the elder informed me, that once in a storm he made a vow to walk in his shirt barefoot to St. ——, I forget the name, and that he performed his vow. It is exceedingly difficult to ununderstand these good people, or to render yourself intelligible to them, owing to the limited extent of their language, the many technical expressions, and the patois. A woman, who presently joined us, told us a long story, of which, had I even been a woman myself, I could not have guessed a word. They might have conspired in my presence without danger against the lives of all the kings in the world.

Tired of listening to words which produced no more effect upon me than the clack of a mill, I retired to the other end of the pier, where I could enjoy in quiet the beautiful prospect which here

presents itself. In ancient times, the sea formed a bay as far as Eu. Now this bay, covered with rich meadows and corn-fields, is intersected by the river, hedges, and alleys, and bordered by gently-rising verdant eminences. On one side of this semicircle of hills is situated Treport, with its church, hewn, as it were, out of the rock; on the left is another village with a church, the name of which I have forgotten, and in the centre Eu, with its chateau and its abbey. And the foreground to this lovely, rural landscape, when viewed from the pier, is formed by the harbour of Treport and the sea, and these constitute a magnificent fore or back-ground, according to the position of the spectator.

Ten years ago, I should have had many cogent reasons for preferring an excursion on foot along the coast of Upper Normandy. This mode of travelling would have been not only cheaper, but more pleasant and more fertile in incidents. Now, I have quite as many, for preferring the diligence: but the love of convenience is at the back of them all, and this is sure to gain the victory.

Beyond St. Valerie en Caux there is a high hill, which begins in the town itself, and which afforded us time to walk through it; so I could transport myself in thought to the days when William the Conqueror embarked his troops here for the invasion of England. But the few fishing smacks, the empty streets, the quietness of the town, scarcely

permitted the imagination to dwell on this idea, and the voice of the conductor, calling to us from the top of the hill to rejoin the carriage, dispelled it entirely.

On reaching Fecamp, I had half a day before me, and I employed it in delivering my letters of recommendation, and looking about the town. One of these letters was to Mons. F., who is not more distinguished for profound erudition as an antiquary, than for amiable qualities as a man of the world, and who promised to accompany me next morning to show me the abbey, and whatever else is worth seeing at Fecamp.

I spent the rest of the day in exploring the town and the harbour. Fecamp is but a single street, half a league long, of about fifteen hundred houses, and nine or ten thousand inhabitants. Most of the houses are of recent construction, and give a modern look to the town, which is said to have been a place of some importance under the first race of the Frankish sovereigns. The port is large enough to hold at least ten times as many ships as I saw in it, whence it may be inferred that the trade of the town was formerly more extensive than it is at present.

The name of Fecamp is said to be derived either from Fisci-campus, or Fici-campus; in the former case, because the Romans there received the tribute levied upon the surrounding country. The derivation from Fici-campus I shall have occasion to explain hereafter. The adjacent country was called at the time of the Roman conquest Caleti, which

antiquaries derive from the German word *kalt*, cold, though it is not clear how the Germano-Belgians, to whom it must have owed this denomination, and who came from a more northern country, could have found this cold enough to deserve such a name. The winds which prevail here, and the sea-air render the climate much less cold than that of the region which the Belgians had forsaken.

The abbey, the ruins of an ancient castle, and the harbour, are the only remarkable objects of this town. Mons. F. called the day after my arrival to take me to the abbey. I was in the best humour in the world for receiving instruction. When we entered the church, we found there Mons. F.'s daughter and a friend of her's, who, having never seen the abbey, availed herself of this opportunity. The abbey is the offspring of several different centuries, as is evident in the style of the individual parts. The whole does not produce an agreeable effect, for the church is disproportionately long for its height. There was formerly a partition in the middle of the nave, which served as a point of repose for the eye and gave equilibrium to the church; but this has been pulled down, that the priest may be seen from one end of the building to the other. Another expedient for making old things new, which is employed throughout all France, is to whitewash the churches. This honour has been conferred on the abbey of Fecamp, and it looks in consequence very like an old maid in the frock in which she went to be confirmed. This

mania for whitewashing and painting the ancient monuments of architecture and sculpture has degenerated at Fecamp into real Vandalism in regard to an interment of the Virgin Mary. On the right of the abbey is a chapel containing a groupe executed in stone, which is not without merit as a work of art. During the revolution it suffered much: several of the figures were beheaded. To make amends for this mutilation, plaster heads have been attached to the stone bodies, and they have all been painted red, and yellow, and brown, so that they look extremely droll. But the best of the joke is that, for want of other heads, that of a Cato has been joined to the body of St. Peter, Voltaire's to that of St. Mark, and Cicero's to St. James's. They all look astounded, and the question is, whether the miracle which is taking place before their eyes, or that which struck off the heads of the saints and clapped their's in their places, is the cause of their astonishment.

But by far the most remarkable thing in this church is the *précieux sang*. Close to the church is a shop, where you may buy a little book about the "precious blood," and beads, medals, &c. stained with the blood. I shall translate the history of the invaluable relic, as given in that publication. It is headed "Histoire du précieux sang de Notre Seigneur Jesus Christ, qui repose en l'Abbaye de la Très-Sainte Trinité de Fecamp." The history then begins thus:—

"Joseph of Arimantia and Nicodemus, (secret

disciples of our divine Redeemer Jesus Christ, whom the Jews unjustly crucified) went to Pilate and begged of him the body of our divine Redeemer, that they might lay it in the grave. He granted their request. According to the gospel of St. John, Nicodemus had gone in the night that Christ hung upon the cross, and with a knife removed the precious blood which was clotted about the wounds on the hands and feet of our divine Redeemer, put it into a glove, and preserved it with great veneration as long as he lived. But, aware that his dissolution was at hand, as he had no children, he acquainted his nephew, Isaac, with his secret, gave him the glove, with the inestimable treasure that it contained, and said: 'Here, take the blood of the true prophet, Jesus, whom our elders caused to be unjustly crucified; preserve it with reverence, and pay to it the respect and the adoration which it deserves, and thou shalt never want for any thing.' Then Isaac took the precious treasure from the hand of his uncle, and put it into a strong coffer. He never omitted paying reverence to it every day, and he became rich and powerful. His wife asked him how he had acquired all this wealth is so short a time. He replied that it was a gift of God. Whereupon the wicked woman flew into a passion. But one day, when she found her husband on his knees before the coffer, she instantly went to the Jews, and told them that she had caught her husband worshipping an idol.

As Isaac had to endure much annoyance in consequence of this accusation, he resolved to leave the

city of Jerusalem, where he was not safe, and removed to the town of Sidon, on the sea coast. Some years afterwards, he had a vision that Titus and Vespasian, Roman emperors, should come with many legions to destroy Jerusalem; so he made a leaden box, into which he put the precious blood of our divine Redeemer, and then he made a hole in a fig-tree which grew in his garden, and deposited therein his incomparable treasure. Some time afterwards he had a second vision, acquainting him that the Romans would destroy every thing with fire and sword, whereupon he resolved to cut down the fig-tree and to throw the trunk into the sea. It was not without sorrow that he executed this resolution; but, in a third vision, he heard a voice, which said to him: 'Be of good cheer; the precious blood which thou hast thrown into the sea shall land in a province of France, and be there adored by true Christians!'

"Isaac, comforted and overjoyed, related his vision to his wife and to his neighbours, and gave them an account of this whole affair. The report of what we have here communicated spread throughout the whole territory of Jerusalem, and so far that we have often heard the narrative in our country; and the Jews themselves, on account of the authority of Isaac and Nicodemus, being desirous to perpetuate the memory of so extraordinary a report, wrote it down in their annals in Hebrew letters.

"In fact, the trunk of the fig-tree was carried to the vale of Fecamp, where it was found by the

children of a man named Boyo, who cut off a twig which had shot out of it, and carried it to their parents. As the latter had never seen this kind of wood, they asked the children where they had found that twig. They replied that they had found it in that part of the valley which abounded most in herbage, and that there were two others of the same sort there. Next day the father went with his children to fetch the two other branches, and he planted them in his garden, where great miracles took place.

"Boyo tried several times to remove the trunk, but in vain. When this man died, his wife, named Mary, was left a widow with two children.

"And at Christmas tide there came a pilgrim and begged for a night's lodging. Mary granted it, saying that she was poor, and could not make him so comfortable as she wished. The same evening, Mary said sorrowfully; 'O my husband, if thou wert still living, I should have a billet to put upon the fire!' Her afflicted children said to their mother: 'We have now one to help us, so we will try to-morrow to fetch home the fig-tree that lies in the valley.' 'O, my children,' she replied, 'you know that your father, with all his skill, never could do as much.' The pilgrim, having made inquiries concerning the matter, said: 'We will go to-morrow morning with a car, and bring it hither, God willing.' Next day they took a car, and lifted the trunk upon it without the least difficulty; but, after they had gone a few paces, how great was their surprise to see the car break down on the spot where

the abbey of Fecamp now stands! The pilgrim collected a heap of stones, and said: 'This trunk contains the precious blood of our divine Redeemer Jesus Christ. Here shall be erected the building that shall be dedicated to him to all eternity. Happy this province, for it contains the price of the redemption of the world!' After he had said these words, he vanished.

"When duke Anseguise and many nobles were hunting in this valley, and he commanded the dogs to be loosed, they saw a stag of astonishing size before them. After they had pursued him for a long time, he stood still on the spot where the trunk lay; and after he had bowed his head toward those who pursued him, these were fixed motionless and deprived of the use of their limbs. The stag walked in a large circle round the spot where he had stood still and disappeared. When Anseguise had prayed fervently to God, they all recovered the use of their limbs. Anseguise, who had attentively watched the motion of the stag, caused a chapel to be built there, and resolved to erect a church in honour of the holy Trinity. But death overtook him before he could perform his vow.

"St. Unaninque, governor of the country, under Lothaire or Clotaire, determined to fulfil the vow of his predecessor, caused the foundations of a church to be laid in honour of the holy Trinity, and erected an abbey there. He had the holy virgin St. Childemarche fetched from Bordeaux to be the first abbess.

"When the pagans had desolated this country and destroyed the abbey, the nuns, in order to prevent the barbarians from doing violence to their modesty, cut off their noses and lips, that they might inspire them with horror rather than desire.

"After the first duke of Normandy, named Roal, was dead, he was succeeded by duke William, called Longsword. This duke caused the abbey to be rebuilt. Several bishops, in their quality of ecclesiastics, and laymen, were invited to the consecration, and were present. And there came an unknown man of majestic appearance. He entered the church, picked up the precious blood, which had been left lying among the rubbish, and carried it to the high altar, in the presence of the whole assembly, saying:—'Here is the price of the redemption of the world, that comes from Jerusalem: those who wear any thing that has been stained with the precious blood shall be protected from all misfortunes.' Then the unknown person vanished, leaving the print of his foot in a stone which is still to be seen in the baptismal chapel.

"Since that time the precious blood has not ceased to enjoy the highest veneration on the part of all the faithful. The old traditions teach us how many miracles have here been wrought. A great number of pilgrims come hither every year, especially the inhabitants of Ivetot, who have for many years performed this pilgrimage, that commenced during a contagious disease, which raged in that town, but which has never since made its appearance.

"The procession of the precious blood is held every year on the Friday before Passion week in the interior of the abbey of Fecamp. It takes place also on the Monday of the holy Trinity, when the inhabitants of Ivetot and the whole adjacent country come to pay homage to it.

"Extract from a manuscript written in the year 1527."

After this history of the precious blood, I need say very little concerning the church. The stone, with the foot-print of the unknown angel, is still to be seen. Great numbers of pilgrims actually come hither still on the days specified, and as the account says, most of the inhabitants of Ivetot and the surrounding country. Miracles too are still wrought, at least some that have but recently taken place are always related. Those who would assert that the age of miracles is past might convince themselves of the contrary here in Fecamp. At the shop where I bought the history of the precious blood, I was offered another little book, in which, at least half a hundred recoveries and conversions, wrought by a medal of the immaculate Virgin during the last six years, are enumerated and described. The book costs but six and the medal only two sous. It was printed in 1837. How much the book produces for its author, and the medal for the inventor, I know not: but the precious blood is invaluable to Fecamp; for the inhabitants, innkeepers, tradesmen, and the church, make a profit by it one year with another of not less than some hundred thousands of francs.

One thing surprised me. The book makes no mention of a spring which derives, or is said to derive, its name, its celebrity, and its medicinal property from the precious blood. Each of the pilgrims buys at least one bottle of the water, which enables them to dispense with the phials of the apothecary. On inquiring about this spring, I learned that it belongs to a private person, who lets it, and that it still produces a yearly income of several thousand francs at two sous per bottle. It is no doubt because it belongs to a private individual, that the priest who wrote that history takes care not to mention it. But perhaps there may be another reason for the omission. At times, especially in hot weather, the spring is far from copious. Now the owner of it is an homoiopath, and asserts that one drop of the sacred fluid in a hogshead of river water is but the more efficacious; and therefore he never hesitates, when the spring is low and the demand great, to dilute its produce with a few hogsheads of ordinary water. The priest who wrote the book may belong to the old school of the alloiopaths, the puritans who deem it a sin for christian innkeepers to baptize their wine; and perhaps it was on this account that he has not noticed the spring. And who can blame him?

The name of Fecamp, as derived from Ficicampus, is thus supposed to owe its origin to the fig-tree. It is remarkable that, in several places in Normandy, as for instance at Tancarville, we meet with names which seem to indicate, that fig-trees

formerly existed there. Could the almighty Romans have so far conquered Nature in Normandy, as to make that province, which now produces nothing but apples, yield figs in ancient times? It is only in reference to this derivation that the abbey of Fecamp has any historical import. The monks formerly lived here in tolerable quiet, and history has very little to say concerning their abbots, which is a good sign. One of them was a member of the tribunal which condemned the Maid of Orleans to death. Casimir, king of Poland, here rested from the pleasures and pains of royalty. Another abbot, Aychard I., was unanimously elected, and the monks stated in their Chronicle that he was pointed out by the Holy Ghost: and this I can readily believe, for, after his election, the Chronicle says nothing more about him, but that he increased each monk's allowance of wine by one-third. He *was* a pious man.

Abbot William II. (who died in 1107) instituted a donation of half a pound of bread for every one who should apply for it at the gate of the abbey. This charity was continued till the dissolution of the abbey, and then amounted to twelve hundred pounds of bread per day, which was a yearly expence of ten thousand francs. It could well afford this donation, for the annual revenue of the house amounted to several hundred thousand francs. It gave away half or one-third of what it received in tithes. There were converts of this kind in almost every village in Normandy, and all were nearly as chari-

table. As in Spain, the people were reduced by them to beggary, and then they grew benevolent, and doled out alms to them. That is the secret. Far better had they, like the Russian grandees, offered the knout to the starving wretches. At any rate, had this been done, all Normandy would not, even at this day, be burdened with beggar-colonies, which certainly owe their origin to that period. It always takes centuries to exterminate the last roots, the last consequences, of a vicious system.

Mons. F., who had accompanied me to the church, conducted me from it to the garden of a private gentleman behind the town-house, containing the ruins of an ancient castle. He told me a great deal about this castle and about the dukes of Normandy, who are said to have resided there. Upon the whole, I am no friend to ruins, unless when by way of contrast they impart a new charm to a lovely landscape, or possess a living historical import, that is to say, confirm some everlasting maxim of history. It is interesting enough to know that duke Ypsilon was born, dwelt, or died here, but I must confess that it interests me no more than to be told that the wife of the duke's meanest serving-man produced a child in this place.

I took a walk to the pier: the sea ran high. On the right of the pier, scarcely ten paces from it, the waves washed the foot of the perpendicular cliff, and blocks as high as a man, which lay scattered around, attested the power of the billows that had rent them from their places. These rocks once witnessed an

achievement which is scarcely paralleled in history for its incredible boldness.

The inhabitants of Fecamp had espoused the cause of the League: they built on the top of the cliff a strong castle, into which M. de Villars, commandant of Rouen, retired with his troops. Boisrosé, an adherent of the royal party, resolved to make himself master of the fortress. But it was so guarded on all sides that a surprise was out of the question, except on the side next to the sea, and there a steep precipice of several hundred feet, which could not be approached at flood-tide, rendered any attempt next to impossible. It was on this side, nevertheless, that Boisrosé resolved to ascend to the fortress. Two soldiers devoted to his interest contrived to get admitted among the troops of Villars. One dark, stormy night, Boisrosé proceeded with fifty men in two boats to the foot of the cliff. Having reached the spot, the two soldiers, at a given signal, let down a rope from above, to which Boisrosé attached a cable provided with knots; this the two soldiers hauled up and fastened to the parapet. Two sergeants climbed up first, then the other soldiers, and lastly Boisrosé, having first pushed off the two boats from the shore, and rendered retreat impossible. In this manner the bold assailants had ascended two-thirds of the way, when their progress was suddenly interrupted, and tidings reached Boisrosé, that the first sergeant had lost his courage and presence of mind. To return was impracticable. Boisrosé clambered up from shoulder to shoulder

over his companions till he reached the sergeant, and, pointing his sword to his breast, forced him to proceed. Thus the little troop at length reached the top. The sentries were despatched, and the rest of the garrison made prisoners.

The man who looks at this steep rock must have no nerves if he can think of this deed without shuddering; and, with all my respect for popular tradition, I should have placed it in the class of legends, had it not been recorded in contemporary historical documents. As it is, one can but bow in admiration before the spirit, the courage, and the resolution, which make even impossibilities possible.

During my stay in Fecamp, I generally spent the evening at a sort of casino. On the first evening, I felt quite comfortable. It did me good to see all the company so earnestly pursuing their unmeaning diversions, a party at whist or domino, or enjoying the decisive crisis of a general game at bowls. The next day, I was more indifferent; on the third, I was a prey to *ennui*, and on the fourth, I conceived such a secret horror of this cruel monotony that, in spite of my promise, I could not prevail on myself to cross the threshold. For three evenings running, the same persons, the same faces, the same jokes, the same gravity: here the four old gentlemen at whist; there the fat rich baker and the starved apothecary at domino, the two mute piquet players at the same table as yesterday and the day before yesterday — who could endure this for a week, for a life, every day of the three hundred and sixty-five days in every year!

On the third evening, a ballot afforded me some relief. This was an event, a public affair. The candidate's name was proclaimed; and the names of those by whom he was proposed were mentioned. It was then asked who had any thing to object against him. Not a voice was raised, but all present assumed a grave and important look. I took this at first for a good omen, but I was egregiously mistaken. It was a signal failure. An acquaintance explained the enigma, and told me that the candidate was not fit for the society, which consisted of the most respectable heads of families of the middle class; whereas he belonged in reality to the common people. Thus I learned that, besides the middle class and the common people, there is also an aristocracy at Fecamp, which keeps itself as far aloof from the respectable middle class as that does from the people. It is curious to see the spirit of caste, scared from the capital by the paving-stones, sneaking for refuge to such obscure corners as these.

CHAPTER XVII.

Pedestrian Excursion — Criquebeuf — Church-Service — Yport —Trip to Etretat — Remarkable Scenery — Inn frequented by Parisian Artists—Alphonse Carr; obligations owing him by the Inhabitants of Etretat—Morning Walk—A Messe d'Equipage —Hymn sung at it—Baptismal Ceremonies—Customs at Weddings—Funerals and Mourning—Baptism of Fishing Vessels—Joint Feasts of the Fishermen—Popular Traditions — History of Romain Bizon — Vestiges of Roman Works discovered at Etretat.

I LEFT Fecamp on a Sunday. The most delightful weather favoured my pedestrian excursion. I was pleased with the country, and with the views of the sea, of Fecamp, and its harbour, which I obtained on the eminence behind the town. But above all I was edified by the quiet and repose of the sabbath. The deepest silence prevailed all around, and scarcely a creature was to be seen abroad. Happy mortals, who have a Sunday at least once in seven days! In Paris, out of seventy persons, one has Sunday every day, while the rest have from year's end to year's end three hundred and sixty-five working days, with a St. Monday now and then among them.

I had so arranged it as to arrive at Criquebeuf about service time, that I might have an opportunity of seeing the fishermen of Yport, who come thither to church. In the church itself I observed nothing indicative of the least poetic taste. It was low, whitewashed, and had a boarded ceiling. When I entered the church, many of the benches were still empty, and I seated myself without ceremony on one of the hindmost: but an old man presently entered and desired me to rise, which I did, conceiving that it was the custom here for the younger to give way to their seniors. I then took my place on another bench, and was not so ready to relinquish it, when, in a few minutes, a sturdy, square-built peasant desired me in no very civil terms to give it up to him. On my refusal, he told me that it belonged to him; and, of course, I had no inclination to dispute his right of possession. To this second bench there was a kind of slide, which an old woman drew out and offered me. At first I was unwilling to accept it, but she insisted, and as she appeared to be poor, I concluded that she expected a trifle for the accommodation: I therefore took the seat, intending to give her something after the service.

The church was at length crammed, and mass commenced. A solemn silence prevailed. The singing then began. Heaven knows why it has denied the French all taste and feeling for sacred music. They are in other respects a richly gifted people, but the most lamentable singers in the world. I was here annoyed more particularly by one of my

neighbours on the bench before me. His voice was heard above that of the whole congregation; and to show, I suppose, that he needed no prompter, he sang quicker than all the rest, so as to be always a bar before them, and when he had done he would look round triumphantly at the laggards and at me. And then the roaring of the *serpent!* I should have liked to bruise its head.

Wishing, however, to see the end, I determined to hold out. The singing became by degrees less loud: some women near me, who had annoyed me sadly, ceased to be heard at all; and when I looked round to discover the cause of the silence, I perceived that they had quietly fallen asleep in the Lord. They did not wake till the transubstantiation. My attention being thus called to the matter, I counted among twenty pious Christians on the three benches nearest to me no fewer than twelve of both sexes who were taking a comfortable nap.

The *Suisse*, an official resembling the beadle in English churches, with a Bonaparte hat, the halbert of a Landsknecht, and the bandoleer of a Trabant — thus borrowing his equipments from different countries and different ages — was entertaining enough, when, with proud look stamping the floor with the shaft of his halbert, he strutted before the priest as he sprinkled the church with holy water, or preceded the female notables collecting contributions for the mother of God and the heart of Jesus. The majority of the congregation changed their sous for two liards, that they might divide the sum fairly between the two claimants.

Upon the whole, the service was just the same as it is in all French villages, and I was glad enough when it was over. I then looked about for my old woman, whose debtor I considered myself. But she was already gone, and then I perceived that she had behaved more generously to me than I imagined. God bless her for it! my walk had rather tired me. But, who knows; perhaps she took me for the nephew of Monsieur le Maire, or some such high functionary. I walked with the fishermen to Yport. On leaving Criquebeuf, the road soon leads down hill, and the little fishing village, on a narrow creek, surrounded by rocks, then appears before you. The poetry which here prevails in Nature made amends for the prose that I had met with at church. The silent, tranquil village, and before it the young fishing-smacks on the beach, and beside these the old invalid barks covered with straw roofs and serving as huts, then the steep rugged rocks confining the prospect on one side, while on the other it extended over the sea further than the eye could reach, formed a beautiful and interesting picture.

Sunday, the sabbath, which the pious fishermen keep holy, deprived me of all the fine sights which I might have otherwise witnessed, when man and wife jointly launch their boats into the sea, or haul them up on the sand. The Sunday paraphernalia, mostly exhibiting some touches of the fashion of the day, deprived me also of the sight of the characteristic costumes which had been promised me. I consoled myself with the idea that my curiosity would

be gratified on the morrow. At length, that inexorable tyrant of man, the stomach, obliged me to seek a public-house. There I found a plain, wholesome dinner, and better cider than I had ever drunk in my life. Hitherto it had always excited my pity or my irony, when I heard Normans speaking of their cider with a sort of enthusiasm. Now, I cheerfully forgive them this sin; for here I found that the juice of the apple is an excellent and refreshing beverage.

My host dined with me, and we were soon joined by some other guests. The landlord spoke French, but the others a gibberish of which I could only catch a word here and there, when it was pronounced slowly. On the other hand, the landlord himself did not always understand me. He told me that the inhabitants of Yport would be glad to have a church of their own, as it was inconvenient to have to go half a league every Sunday to hear mass. He seemed to have some special reasons of his own, for he added that the walk to Criquebeuf to church took out of the village a good deal of money, which the young fellows spend in the public-houses there. The spirit of joint stock companies has penetrated even to Yport; for the principal inhabitants of the village had formed a plan of building a church by subscription for shares. I told him the story of the church at Maison rouge, near Paris, which the Lord created out of nothing, because those who undertook to build it brought the materials and acted the part of masons and bricklayers themselves. I will

not pledge myself that, before the end of a year, the people of Yport will not have wrought a similar miracle; for all present listened most attentively while I was relating the circumstance.

After dinner, I asked mine host if he could let me have a bed, but he referred me to another public house. On my arrival there, I was recommended to a third, and from that back to the second, where, out of kindness, they offered to make up a straw bed for me. This was an unlooked-for disappointment. It was already four o'clock, and I had no time for hesitation. Either to sleep upon straw, or to return to Fecamp, was an awkward dilemma. I soon made up my mind, and started for the place from which I had come. The weather changed by the way, and I thought myself lucky in reaching the first houses in Fecamp, before a heavy shower of rain began to fall.

Next day I rode to Etretat—yes, rode. I went to a man at Fecamp, who keeps carriages for hire, and inquired the price of a cabriolet to Etretat; but, as I thought it too high, he told me that there was an opportunity for going thither, of which I might avail myself. This opportunity was a char-à-banc, with two old women, a shopkeeper of Fecamp, and an old bachelor of Paris, who was born in Fecamp, and going to see his family. The carriage had no spring, and we were so jolted that I thanked Heaven whenever it went at a foot-pace, which was mostly the case, so that we were five hours going four leagues.

About three o'clock we reached the mill, on the top of the hill that descends to Etretat. Here our vehicle stopped, as it is scarcely possible for carriage and horses to proceed to the village. Just beyond the mill, the road declines rapidly to the valley, and affords a prospect equally beautiful and sublime. I let my companions go on by themselves, and sat down on a heap of stones to enjoy the view.

Before me opened a luxuriant valley, dividing at the further end into two branches: on the right, nearer to me, was another valley, solemn and tranquil. At the extremity of these valleys lies Etretat, its foot bathed by the sea. Close to the village, on the left, the rocks rise to a prodigious height; and it is not their ruggedness and wildness alone that impart to these an infinite charm. As Nature shapes giant animals and buildings in the clouds, so has she displayed in these rocks her fancy and her creative power. In those to the left of the village, she has hewn an archway, through which a ship might pass in full sail, and sculptured pillars, as though the whole were but the ruin of some colossal edifice, in comparison with which the largest houses of the village are but like mole-hills.

If ever I felt the poverty of language, it was here. I had sat a full hour, before I resolved to go down to the village, and when I had walked through it and cleared the houses, and found on the right side of Etretat a repetition of the gigantic pillars and ruins, and among them a second arch, I would fain have invented new words for these wonders, all was so different and so new.

As the sea did not permit me to contemplate these arches from below, I felt a strong desire to examine those works of Nature from above. Not till then was I aware of their awful grandeur. In particular places, the peaked rocks to the right and left of us shoot up high into the air; in others, yawning gulphs open at our feet, out of which the agitated sea sends up tones like the voice of a bard singing the destruction of his race. And before us, in the sea, towers the Aiguille, a pyramid tall as a hill. For ages the sea has been silently mining its foot, or battering it with its foaming billows, but without making any impression. Fifty paces further is a semicircular recess, which may have served for the orchestra of the chapel belonging to this castle of some giant race. The roof has fallen in, but the pillars are still standing. This is a temple of God, built by God himself.

My heart was too full. I could not stay long above, and was obliged to descend, to recover myself. On considering these marvels from below, we are filled with astonishment; but they elevate us—they lift us up. Above, on the contrary, we are filled with awe. Below, we feel apprehensive of the fall of those masses, but above we are seized with a giddiness, which stuns and annihilates, and deprives us of the power of being afraid.

On returning to human society, the gigantic spirits which had haunted my imagination gradually left me, and I became more composed. But it was not till the sun had set, and darkness de-

scended upon rocks and sea, that I was aware that since morning I had taken no refreshment.

The village is small, and inhabited exclusively by fishermen. When I was told at the mill on the top of the hill, that it is scarcely possible for a carriage to go the whole way from Fecamp to Etretat, I began to be afraid lest I might fare here, in regard to a lodging, as I had done at Yport. I was therefore agreeably surprised, when I found at the inn *au Rendezvous des Artistes*, kept by M. Blanquet, a good supper, a handsome room, and a clean comfortable bed. The house has not its name for nothing. Numbers of artists are continually visiting Etretat, and they mostly take up their quarters here. During the bathing season, a little colony always retires hither, to enjoy the beauties of Nature, and to recruit after the dissipations of Paris. This may be done at a very cheap rate: a room, breakfast, dinner, and supper, cost altogether three francs fifty centimes, or less than three shillings English.

You find here, moreover, a sort of library composed of the novels of Alphonse Carr. This writer has made Etretat his laboratory, and introduced it wholesale into one of his works, "Le Chemin le plus court." Etretat owes him much, for he has directed attention to the beauties of the country, so that it is become the fashion for the writers and artists of Paris to come on pilgrimage hither. Though I am no friend to the distortions of Alphonse Carr, yet I forgive him them, since I

have seen Etretat, and know how many Parisians' hearts he has opened, by placing himself in their way and directing them to this place. The inhabitants of Etretat are thankful enough for this service, and are fond of talking about Monsieur Alphonse. Monsieur César, the landlord's son, when he heard that I knew Monsieur Alphonse, talked the whole evening about nothing else; and he, in particular, has a right to rate him very high; for Monsieur César has not only gained money by the visits of Parisians, but a kind of polish from his intercourse with them, which renders his conversation extremely agreeable.

From my room I had a view of the sea and the rocks, which, lighted by the moon, presented a new scene. The shadows of the rocks were mirrored in the sea, and the sea sported with them, giving them life by its own motion. The most solemn silence reigned around; not a creature was stirring in the village or on the shore. The sea, too, was calm; not a breeze ruffled its surface. The roaring of the surf alone, like distant thunder, told of the possibility of a storm.

How long I stood at the window, absorbed in silent awe and adoration, I cannot tell. At length I went to bed. The voice of the breakers was my lullaby.

I awoke next morning before sunrise. I could not resist the desire to examine the rocks on the right from above. When I left the house, a light transparent fog covered the village; but, by the

time I was half-way up the hill, I found myself above it, and then enjoyed the most delicious morning view. A stream of mist-clouds lay upon the valleys which here united themselves, and, passing over the houses of the village, poured itself into the sea. The sun, which was just rising, tinged these vapours while moving off from the land below me. Here and there they were less dense, and then I caught a glimpse of a house or a tree illumined by the sun. And on the azure sea, into which this stream of fog descended, the boats of the fishermen going out to their occupation appeared one after another emerging from the vapour, first the tops of the masts, then the sails, and at last the hulls and the fishermen. At least twenty of them became in this manner gradually visible, standing out to sea.

I walked a good distance along the cliff, till I came to a place where the rock extends further into the sea than elsewhere, and affords a view on both sides. Here a custom-house post is established, and one might envy the keeper, if the tempest did not at times assert its right, and rage so furiously that at every step you are in danger of being blown away and hurled into the abyss. From this spot a footpath leads down to the strand. It made me dizzy as I stood above and looked down this path; but aged persons and children clamber up and skip down it. The two arched rocks, on the right and left of Etretat, Cape Antifer, and the cliff from Fecamp, may be seen from this place.

I had been told that at eight o'clock this morning a *messe d'equipage* would be performed. At certain seasons of the year, the fishermen of Etretat repair to Dieppe and Fecamp, in order to sail from those places on the herring and mackarel fishery. Before the departure of each vessel, the crew cause a solemn mass to be read, that they may, by means of it, be preserved from mishap and successful in their fishery. Such a mass I was desirous to attend.

When I reached the church, which is a good step from the village, and built partly in the Gothic, partly in the Byzantine style, the mass had already begun. All the men belonging to the vessel for which the mass was said were assembled in a side chapel, with their wives and children, their fathers and mothers. They prayed in silent devotion, and sang with a sort of wild fervour, which produced an effect, though their singing was neither pleasing nor even solemn. But at the end of the mass, they sang a hymn, which, in its simplicity, seemed better suited to them, and in which men, women, and children, all joined kneeling. This hymn, though I could not catch the words, made a deeper impression upon me than all that had gone before, which seemed to me to be mere matter of form. On inquiring afterwards concerning it, I learned that it is peculiar to the fishermen of Etretat, and that it is always sung at the departure of a vessel. An acquaintance of mine procured me a copy of it.

Le matin, quand je me reveille,
Je vois mon Jesus venir
Il est beau à merveille
C'est lui qui me reveille,
C'est Jesus !
C'est Jesus !
Mon aimable Jesus !

Je le vois, mon Jesus, je le vois
Porter sa brillante croix
Là haut sur cette montagne,
Sa mère l'accompagne,
C'est Jesus !
C'est Jesus !
Mon aimable Jesus !

Ses pieds, ses mains, sont clouées,
Et son chef est couronné
Des grosses epines blanches ;
Grand Dieu ! quelle souffrance !
C'est Jesus !
C'est Jesus !
Mon aimable Jesus !

A l'autel du saint sacrement
Jesus fait son aliment,
Dedans la sainte hostie
Mon Jesus est en vie.
C'est Jesus !
C'est Jesus !
Mon aimable Jesus !

L'èglise est sa garnison
Et sa maison d'oraison,
Les anges en sont la garde
Que dieu nous sauve et garde.
C'est Jesus !
C'est Jesus !
Mon aimable Jesus !

If this hymn possesses no particular poetic beauty, it is the more childlike and simple. How old it is I can not tell, but the rhyme *blanche* and *souffrance*, here pronounced *souffranche*, proves it to be of Norman origin. It is sung before the departure of every ship and in every storm; and the faith that saves has certainly imparted by means of this hymn new strength and confidence, rescued many a fishing-boat from destruction, and given back many a father to his children, many a lover to his sweetheart.

Of the intelligent shoemaker who procured me this hymn, I made inquiry concerning the manners and customs of the country. It is only persons of the lower class who can furnish such information, but not all of them; unless a man has seen other countries and other customs, he has no point of comparison; things of importance appear to him not worth notice, and vice versa. I had applied to the right person.

Whoever would learn to know the people must observe them at the three epochs of life, birth, marriage, and death.

The ceremonies of baptism are of little importance at Etretat. The women only assemble, originally no doubt rather to congratulate the lying-in woman, and to assist her in any way they can. Hence has arisen a sort of treat, at which cakes and cider are handed about. The men are too busy to pay much attention to the new citizen of the world: nor do they set much value upon him, till

he is strong enough to go to sea with them, and to defy its storms and its dangers.

The customs at weddings are of more consequence. Love still makes matches here. The fishermen are nearly all alike rich or poor, whichever you please; and, owing to this equality, all those intrigues, that traffic in human beings, which so frequently interfere in other places between two hearts, are here unknown. Hence those only find who seek each other, and hence too arise happy marriages, to which an unhappy one is an almost unknown exception at Etretat.

Matches are usually concluded at the time of confirmation. The boys and girls go together to receive the preliminary religious instruction, and there most of them form connexions which nothing but death can afterwards dissolve. At first the young people see and speak to each other but seldom; and that secretly, in sequestered walks. They are often themselves not aware of the nature of their attachment, till the railleries of their friends of both sexes, who are a few years older, explain the riddle and open their eyes. The consciousness of their mutual love only serves to knit the bond more closely, and as there is not a creature to oppose their inclination, they make no scruple to acknowledge it. From this moment there is not a leisure hour, not a holiday, but they spend it together. The periodical absences of the lover, the dangers which he encounters during them, strengthen their attachment; and the lover has soon obtained all that his mistress has

to bestow. If this intercourse is likely to produce fruit, the wedding-day is fixed. No instance is known of a young fellow having deserted his pregnant mistress; and the few exceptions which have occurred during the last fifty years, when a lad has married his lass before she exhibited evidence of her fertility, can easily be enumerated. Marriages thus contracted are richly blest with offspring: twelve, sixteen children are not unusual, and my informant assured me that children here thrive *comme le fumier*.

When God has thus given his blessing to the future union, the lovers declare themselves engaged, and the day for the wedding is fixed; but a sort of solemn betrothal previously takes place. This is called *l'embaguemcnt*. To this end, the bridegroom with his parents, and the bride with her's, her sisters, and her most intimate friends, go to Fecamp or Dieppe, where the bridegroom buys for the bride a gold chain, frequently a watch, and a prayer-book, and silver rings for her sisters and female friends. The poorest fisherman does not omit this ceremony; the only difference is that the presents are more or less costly, according as he is more or less wealthy.

The wedding-day at length arrives. All the friends of both parties are invited to the solemnity. Those of the bride meet at her father's, and those of the bridegroom at his; and thence they proceed in two trains, the bride taking the arm of her father, and the bridegroom his mother's, to the church. The priest gives the benediction. From this mo-

ment the two families consider themselves as related, and, as a sign of this relationship, the two companies, which have hitherto kept separate, mingle together. The father of the bridegroom steps up to the bride and says to her: *Levez-vous, ma fille*, and her mother takes the arm of the young husband. An entertainment, at which cider flows in streams, follows the ceremony. Among the wealthier fishermen, the young husband pays the expence of it. But even the poor here have a right to enjoy themselves; and, in this case, all the friends and relatives club together to furnish what the bridegroom's resources cannot supply.

The fisherman of Etretat confronts death every day, and learns to look him fearlessly in the face. Every corpse, after the head has been covered with a napkin, called *swers* (from *sueur*, *sudarium*), a clean shirt put on it, and it has been sewed up in a sheet, is placed upon the threshold of the house-door, with the feet reaching into the street, and there exposed, frequently for twenty-four hours, till the priest comes to fetch it. Around the corpse is formed a sort of chapel with sheets and linen cloths; before it stands a vessel with holy water, in which a palm-branch is left lying. This branch, which has been blessed on Palm Sunday, is kept for this express purpose the whole year, and annually renewed. If the deceased is an elderly man or woman, he or she is carried to the church by the Frères de Charité. Three tolls of the bell, *l'appelle des frères*, announce their arrival to the whole

village, upon which all the friends and relatives, male and female, the latter in long black mourning habiliments, meet and in solemn silence accompany the corpse to its last home. The playmates of the deceased, if a child from ten to sixteen years old, carry the corpse to the churchyard, the girls being dressed in white; if older than sixteen, the nearest friends undertake the office, only in that case the girls are in black. The reason for this difference of dress is partly the same as that for not making any particular ceremony at the time of baptism, and partly the christian notion that innocent children belong by right to Heaven.

The mourning of a wife for her husband, of children for their parents, lasts two years, and in this mourning the whole house and almost every thing in it participate. The kitchen utensils constitute the wealth and the pride of the fishermen's wives, and during the period of mourning, these, with the exception only of just what they want for daily use, are shut up, and not brought out and put in their places again till the two years are expired.

Warm feeling and deep earnestness are the character of these solemnities, and we meet with them in other ceremonies peculiar to the fishermen. If these take less concern in the baptism of their children than fathers in general do, they manifest the deeper interest in the baptism of their vessels.

Whenever a new-born bark is ready to be launched into its proper element, the friends of the father, as well as the men who are to compose her

crew, assemble to attend the baptism of the new citizen of the sea. The priest comes with the sexton, and pronounces his blessing over the vessel and gives her a name. This ceremony is never omitted, for not a fisherman of Etretat would venture to sea in an unbaptized heathen bark. During the christening itself, the men look on in silent devotion, or, when it is over, perform their part by singing the hymn which has been already quoted. After the ceremony they have an entertainment, towards which they all contribute.

Among the men of each smack there is a sort of relationship, a sort of community of property. As they share all dangers, so they honestly share the produce of their toil, and likewise the pleasures of life. Every Saturday the booty of the week is divided, and then they have, at the joint expense, a sort of regale, usually consisting of fish and eggs, with plenty of cider. The utmost hilarity prevails at these weekly festivities, which are here termed *faire la caudré*—in other places *faire la chaudière*. This feeling of relationship extends even beyond life: as at Pollet, after the decease of a fisherman, his widow and orphans have a right to send out their nets with the vessel to which he belonged, and receive their share of what is caught. Though the most unrestrained mirth and gaiety sometimes reign among the fishermen of this place, yet a certain reserve, a certain gravity, scarcely ever leave them. They are rarely seen to dance, and when they do, the dance is nothing but a *ronde*, to which one of the party sings a song.

These ceremonies, these customs, seem to me to furnish evidence of the poetic character of the people. These solemn funeral processions, the christening of vessels, the joint feasts of men knit together into one family by participation in storms and dangers, indicate deep sensibility; and this could not fail to be affected by the grandeur of that Nature which surrounds the seaman wherever he goes. The traditions of the people animated it, and gave rise to tales and stories, some of which are preserved to this day.

On the top of the cliff, to the left of the village, three pointed rocks are seen shooting up towards heaven. Between them is a kind of platform; and from this dizzy elevation, you overlook the village and the fishing smacks, if you are bold enough to climb up to it by a path scarcely a foot wide, with a yawning abyss on either side. This is called the Chambre des Demoiselles, and the people relate the following story concerning it. In those times when the knights were the lords of the country, the village of Etretat belonged to the chevaliers de Frefosé. One of these knights was a libertine, and all the females were obliged to minister to his pleasure. There lived in Etretat three sisters, the pride of the village for beauty and virtue. One Sunday, the knight saw them at church. After mass was over, they were returning home, when the servants of the knight fell upon them, and conducted them to his castle at Filleville. Hitherto no woman had dared to oppose his commands and desires; but with the

three sisters threats and persuasions were alike unavailing. His love was changed into bitter hatred, and he resolved to take a signal revenge upon them. He ordered them to be taken to the above-mentioned platform, and there thrown into a large cask driven full of spikes, which his servants rolled into the abyss.

From that time the spirits of the three victims were seen every night on the spot where they were put into the cask. The fisherman, when approaching from a distance, beheld the white spectral figures, and made the sign of the cross, and when he came nearer, he heard them singing just as they had done before their cruel execution. They never harmed any one. But whenever the chevalier de Frefosé would have gone abroad to entertainments or to the chase, the three sisters would sally from their rocky chamber, and with their frightful figures drive him back to his castle. Thenceforward he had neither rest nor peace; wherever he went, the spectres followed him, so that the incessant terror in which they kept him produced a lingering disease that put an end to his life; and then the three sisters, having accomplished the work of vengeance which they were charged to perform, likewise found repose.

Near the foot of the rock, which bounds the view on the right of Etretat, is seen protruding at ebb-tide a prodigious block, called La Roche St. Olive. It is said that, when the water is deep, there is a spring in this rock; and the popular poetry has,

by means of a tradition, imparted to it a more living import.

One day, a pious woman, named Olive, was washing clothes at this spring. This was in the times when the pagans began to make incursions in France. Olive had not observed that several barks were approaching, and, when she at length looked up, she found herself surrounded by Saracens—so says popular tradition, which here invariably transforms the northern pirates into Saracens. Nothing but a miracle could save her; and she prayed to God for one, vowing at the same time to build a church if he granted her prayer. And God did grant it, and raised a storm which drove the vessels of the Saracens out to sea again. So St. Olive built the church which we still see here. But the devil would not suffer it to remain in the village, and so he removed it to the distance of several hundred paces, to the foot of the hill, where it now stands.

There is another story connected with the disappearance of a rivulet, which once watered the valley, a fact of which there exists historical evidence. At ebb-tide, you see at the beach a number of springs, which altogether might form a stream ten or twelve feet wide. The purest, clearest, freshest water gushes from them, mingling at flood-tide immediately with the sea, and at ebb terminating its course at the distance of about ten paces. Whenever these springs are left uncovered by the tide, fifty, and frequently a hundred, females of all ages

repair to them to wash their clothes. Their tongues go at a greater rate than their wash-beetles. These springs are the court where a jury of females, old and young, is impannelled for the trial of all offences against good morals, and neither the most trivial circumstance, nor the profoundest secret, escapes their penetration. If, which is very rare, a family quarrel, or any other, occurs at Etretat, the egg of discord is sure to have been hatched at these springs.

But I must not forget the popular tradition. The river, which now runs under ground, formerly worked a large mill, near its source, at Graintville l'Alouette. One day, a gipsy woman came to the miller, and, ill and destitute as she was, begged a lodging of him: but the miller, a hard-hearted man, refused her petition with scorn and abuse. Filled with anger at this treatment, the poor creature said to him: "To-morrow morning thou shalt have thy reward." And in the night the miller heard the miserable woman before his house cursing him and repeating all sorts of magic incantations. Obedient spirits flew at her bidding on the wings of the tempest, and dug a subterranean bed for the river, and lo, when the miller rose in the morning, there was no river to be seen!

I have alluded elsewhere to the natural wonders which the fishermen occasionally witness. That cavern, in the cliff on the right, called Le Trou à l'Homme, relates to us a story of this kind. About fifty years ago, a storm drove a Swedish ship against the rocks of Etretat, and dashed her in

pieces. Help was out of the question, as certain destruction threatened any one who should have attempted to afford it. The tempest lasted for full twenty-four hours, and the sea had already cast up most of the bodies before it ceased, and the ebb-tide permitted the Trou à l'Homme to be examined. Upon a high ledge of rock in that cavern, a body was found and lifted down. The motion recalled the man, who was but apparently dead, to consciousness; and he related that, exhausted by his struggle with the waves, he had commended his soul to Heaven at the moment when his senses forsook him. A wave had then cast him upon the ledge, where the tempest seemed to have forgotten him.

It is not quite thirty years since another cavern in the cliff, called Le Trou à Romain Bizon, has had its history. Romain Bizon was a bold fisherman, who with undaunted courage defied the dangers of the sea. But the ever restless ambition of Napoleon required him to display his courage in another sphere, and Romain was marked out for the military service. He was to leave his boat, the sea, and his sweetheart and his poor old mother into the bargain. This was too much for him. On the day when his comrades, on whom the lot had likewise fallen, were marched off, he was the only one who did not answer to his name. Not a creature knew what had become of him. He had found a cleft in the rocks, half a league from Etretat, and made it his abode. Fastening a rope on the top of

the cliff, he had descended by it to the cavern. Letting down a second rope from his new dwelling, he ascended to the top of the cliff by the first for the purpose of removing it; and by means of the other, which reached to the beach, he went down every night about his business, to catch shell-fish among the rocks, and thus supported his mother, who, accompanied by his sweetheart, brought him bread, meat, and other necessaries.

In this manner he lived quietly in his cavern till winter. The cold then obliged him to make a fire at night, and this fire soon apprised the fishermen, who saw it out at sea, that some one must be living on that spot. During the Empire ghosts were extremely shy; half a century earlier, people would have crossed themselves and passed by without saying a word; but now, "Who can be living yonder?" was the first question of the fishermen to one another: and it was presently whispered that it was Romain Bizon. One communicated his conjecture to another, and ere long the strange story reached the ears of the authorities. These first tried by stratagem to draw the fugitive from his hiding-place. They sent their servants, disguised as fishermen, to call him in the night to come down from his hole. But Romain had agreed upon certain signals with his visiters, and when the gendarmes called him, not a creature stirred above. The magistrates at length determined to drive him from his retreat by force or fear. One morning, the mayor of Etretat assembled the whole of the

gendarmerie and the coast-gunners of the environs, and marched with them to capture Romain Bizon. When they were beneath his hiding-place, the mayor summoned him in the name of the law to descend, otherwise he would send up the gendarmes, or have him shot from below. The echo of the rocks was the only reply.

It was much easier to threaten than to perform. There was no way but up the almost perpendicular side of the towering cliff, and it so happened that the brave gendarmerie had no wings. The magistrate ordered the fortress to be attacked, and the whole armed force commenced a platoon-fire, directed against the cleft. The fire was kept up for some time; still all was quiet above, so that it was very doubtful whether the gallant assailants were not much in the same predicament as the far-famed Don Quixote, when he was fighting with windmills. At last, however, Romain seemed to lose his patience. In a terrible voice, he cried from his retreat, "Well, if it must be so, I will." The strokes of an axe resounded in the rock, and in a minute a huge fragment, hurled from the cavern, dispersed the armed force, and the mass of spectators—for the report of the musketry had drawn most of the inhabitants of Etretat to the spot—like chaff scattered by the wind, and drove some of them into the sea. The worthy magistrate was extended at full length on the beach, and narrowly escaped drowning. Stone after stone did the besieged now fling from his castle, so that not one of the brave warriors of the great emperor durst ap-

proach within the range of its formidable artillery. By and by the tide began to flow, and forced the imperial troops to bethink them of retreating. On the following day, the rope by which Romain Bizon had been accustomed to ascend and descend was seen swinging to and fro in the wind; and one bold fellow, having clambered up to his cavern, discovered that he was gone.

In the space of eight years many things may happen. The emperor was dethroned, the Bourbons returned, and peace reigned in France. One evening a stranger came to Etretat, and knocked at the door of a small cottage. When it was opened, Romain Bizon—for it was no other—inquired for *Mère* Bizon. The woman who opened the door coldly replied, "*La Mère* Bizon! why she has been dead these three years." He found his sweetheart again, but she was the wife of another, and the mother of two fine boys and a girl. Happy would it often be if the heart were softer, and would break sooner than the head! A few weeks afterwards the sea was seen playing with a shattered corse. Romain Bizon had thrown himself from the top of the cliff.

For most of these popular tales I am indebted to a very intelligent young man, the abbé Kochet, curate of the church of St François at Havre, who has moreover the merit of having ascertained, by researches on the spot, that there must once have been a Roman settlement of some consequence on the site now occupied by the insignificant fishing

village of Etretat. Traces of baths and aqueducts, at least, seem to prove as much. Relics of ancient masonry, buried beneath gravel, also attest that here were once strong dykes and hydraulic works of considerable importance. Lastly, in digging at the farthest point of the cliff, to the right of Etretat, were discovered the foundations of a castle, probably belonging to the middle ages.

I was sorry after a stay of a few days to be obliged to tear myself from all these beautiful, grand, and sublime scenes. I had promised to attend the wedding of one of my friends at Havre. It was not till the day when it was to take place that I could make up my mind to leave Etretat. Early in the morning I asked my landlord, who had frequently spoken of having occasionally lent his cabriolet and his horses to an artist from Paris, whether he could accommodate me with them for that day. The cabriolet was at my service, but the horses were *en roulage* in Paris. In all Etretat there was nothing of the kind to be procured, and if I meant to fulfil my promise, I must walk. I soon made up my mind, and must confess that I had no reason to repent; for the country as far as Montivilliers well repays the trouble of walking the four leagues. At Montivillers I took a seat in an omnibus for Havre. The bridegroom had addressed a letter to me at Dieppe, to inform me that the wedding would take place two days before it was intended: of course I arrived too late. My excursion commenced with a disappointment, and ended

with one—the ball at Dieppe, and the wedding at Havre. I thanked my Creator that the letter had not reached me, otherwise I should have been obliged to leave Etretat two days before I did, which would have been a much greater misfortune.

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